Commencement 2012

The main University Commencement, where approximately 13,423 degrees were conferred and over 50,000 people converged on the main campus. Facilities employees across the organization supported 200 events during Commencement Week, including the Barnard ceremony where President Obama delivered the keynote address.

Leeding the Way

Columbia University’s environmentally sustainable design and overall project plan for its 17-acre Manhattanville campus in West Harlem has earned LEED® Platinum under the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system established by the U.S. Green Building Council—it’s highest designation and the first LEED-ND Platinum certification in New York City, as well as the first Platinum certification for a university campus plan nationally. Read more on page 6.
As we enter the summer months and the reduced campus population enables our summer construction activities to kick into high gear, I want to take a moment to say a heartfelt thank you and congratulate the entire organization on another outstanding academic year.

At our great university, the culmination of the academic year is Commencement Week, a set of events which showcases the incredible depth and breadth of Facilities. Our employees worked around the clock to support over 200 events during the week, which included the convergence of over 50,000 people on campus during the main University Commencement, and the Barnard College Commencement, where President Obama delivered the keynote address.

Commencements are a time, of course, to celebrate, and we as an organization have much to commemorate, such as our continuing efforts to make our campus more sustainable. In February, the Northwest Corner Building was awarded LEED Gold certification (page 7), which is particularly noteworthy due to the large number of laboratories in the building, since labs typically consume a great deal of energy. In April, our “Clean + Go Green” recycling and reuse program received a United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Environmental Quality Award (page 9) – the highest recognition presented to the public by the EPA. And in May, our Manhattanville campus plan earned LEED Platinum for Neighborhood Development (page 6), the first Platinum certification for a university campus plan nationally, and the first LEED-ND Platinum certification in New York City.

Sustainability also encompasses our commitment to reach out to our neighbors so both campus and community can benefit from our growth. From information sessions connecting our project managers with local vendors to our annual “Spring Get Together” to raise money for and awareness of Columbia Community Service (page 5), it is clear that Facilities is helping to make a difference. And our efforts are being recognized: Facilities was recently honored for “Outstanding Advocacy of the Minority and Women-Owned Business Community (page 9).

Extra special recognition goes out to all of our employees celebrating Silver Service Anniversaries (page 10). Your 25 years of dedication to the University is truly remarkable and incredibly appreciated. I had the opportunity to join the annual 25 year dinner on June 5th and it was, as always, a wonderful celebration.

On a sad note, we recently lost two long-time members of our Facilities family. Mike Schultz worked in our Capital Project Management department for 11 years, and Enzo Rodriguez worked in Operations for nearly 35 years and also served as President of TWU Local 241. Mike and Enzo will be greatly missed and our thoughts continue to be with their families and loved ones.

In both good times and bad, we come together as a Facilities family to support each other and keep the campus moving forward, and I know we will continue to do so this summer, throughout the academic year, and beyond.

Wishing you and your family a wonderful summer, full of health and happiness.

Joe Ienuso
Dear Facilities,

I recently moved out of UAH residence. I am writing this email to express my extreme satisfaction with the staff at 435 W. 119th Street. I have nothing but praise for all of the doormen, custodians, and the super. The doormen [and doormen] Eddy, Timothy, Livin, Victoria, and Rich kept the operations on the first floor smooth and organized, maintained a high level of security, and always greeted me [and any occasional guests that I had over] with extreme kindness. David, the chief handyman for the building is the best I've ever seen. The quality of work and attention to detail is what you would expect at a five-star hotel. A leak, a damaged wall, a cracked tile - David would take care of the problem in no time. Finally, Hector is a very professional super - very attentive to his tenants and the head of a great team.

In short, I am a very lucky to have spent the last three and half years living in 435 W. 119th due to the AMAZING staff.

Tenant, University Apartment Housing

Dear Mr. [Nelson] Falcon,

In August 2011, as a new Columbia University student, I moved into 530 Riverside Drive where Myra Martino serves as Superintendent. I understand you are her immediate supervisor and am writing to let you know what an honor it has been to know Ms. Martino. In addition to being new to the University, I was new to New York City then. Not only did she walk me through the building and make sure I was familiar with the property, but she took the time to give me tips on the best places (and websites) to shop for furniture, housewares and groceries as well as tips on transportation.

Unfortunately, I had to move out of 530 Riverside this week due to a change in my relationship status. However, in the five months that I lived there, it reminded me of the days when I lived in a full-service building back in Los Angeles where I owned two condominiums. Whenever any maintenance issues arose (and there were few thanks to her diligence), Ms. Martino and her team were on top of it in no time. She did not hesitate to get her hands dirty and once even came in, rolled up her sleeves and used the plunger herself. She was also proactive when it came to bed bugs, rodents and cockroaches, none of which I ever saw there.

It was a pleasure to see how much Ms. Martino's team of workers and vendors respected her. This was not only apparent in their day-to-day interactions but in the impeccable condition of the common areas. When I had guests over, including family from out of town, they all commented on how nicely the building was maintained. It goes without saying that I will miss 530 Riverside and having Ms. Martino as my Super.

Tenant, University Apartment Housing

Dear Mr. [Jim] McShane,

Last Sunday night at 2AM, my daughter’s room was broken into and her laptop computer was stolen from her room on West 112th Street.

The intruder climbed up the fire escape—four flights, opened up her closed window and stole her laptop off her desk. Luckily, she was not in her room at that time. Security officers from Columbia public safety responded immediately, as did the NYPD.

Everyone was very professional and extremely nice. [Director of Investigations and Technology Projects] Ken Finnegan and [Associate Director] Denis O’Sullivan were amazing, and today Denis O’Sullivan went with the NYPD and recovered her stolen laptop from a grocery store on 112th street and Frederick Douglas Blvd. It was quite amazing!!!!

As a parent and also as a member of the faculty here at the Medical Center, I cannot begin to thank you and your staff for being so terrific and handling everything in such a professional manner. [My daughter] was beyond thrilled to get it back.

I know you spend a lot of time taking care of many other people’s children… and I for one am very grateful.

Parent, Columbia College

To the Directors of Columbia UAH,

I am writing to share my very positive experience with the UAH at Columbia. From the start, my housing needs were met beyond expectation. And any questions were addressed very promptly and thoroughly by the staff. For example, Leilani replied very quickly during evening hours, and I was very impressed that my question was so quickly addressed.

Your dedication as a team allows students to truly focus on their studies with a worry-free experience and it is much appreciated!

Student, School of International and Public Affairs

Dear [Anthony Nasser],

Just wanted to say thank you very much for your and Keith [George]'s persistence with the replacement window panes at the café skylight.

Attached are a few photos of the drama: 12x4 foot panes, weighing over 700 pounds, requiring 10 men and a hefty boy to haul up the staircases, hoist through the third floor window, and position into place on top of the café roof. As has been always the case with our glass house out there, it was a very dramatic bit of work— successfully installed, intact. We are whole, again!

Staff, Columbia Journalism School

Dear [Anthony Nasser],

I just wanted to email you to share some feedback about Ajay. I stay in apartment 4D, at 542 W. 112th and have been here for 2 years now. I am leaving next week and before I do so, I wanted you to know that Ajay has been a tremendous help over the past 2 years. He has always been professional and really responsive in times of need. My wife and I only have great things to say about him.

Thank you very much for your time.

Student, Columbia Business School
Around Campus in Pictures

Tour Fit for a Provost

On March 14th, Vice President of Operations Frank Martino (right), and Senior Engineers Peter Knoblauch (far left) and Steve Kerch (second from left) led a tour of the University’s physical plant for Provost John Coatsworth.

Car Free

Manager of Crime Prevention Programs Ricky Morales registers a bicycle at Columbia’s annual “Bike to Campus Day” on Friday, April 20th at the Sundial. Bike commuters received free bike tune-ups and registration with the NYPD, discount bike locks and accessories, and other amenities.

Hire on the Spot

Facilities and its construction partners held a “Hire on the Spot” event on May 8th for minority, women and local union workers for current opportunities at the Campbell Sports Center project at the Baker Athletic Complex. Attendees were able to meet with first tier contractors currently working on the project and learn about workforce opportunities across many trades.

Cleaning House

Hector Gorritz, resident manager at 435 West 119th Street, shows off the building’s new amenity: a re-fashionNYC bin. Annually NYC residents throw away approximately 200,000 tons of clothes, towels, blankets, curtains, shoes, handbags, belts, and other textiles and apparel. These bins, currently in nine University Apartment Housing buildings with the option to expand, make clothing donations as easy as possible through convenient in-building drop-off service. In just a few short months, tenants in these buildings have donated and recycled 8,000 pounds of clothing!
Residential Operations Spring Get Together Raises Nearly $3,000 for Columbia Community Service

On April 26, 2012, over fifty people gathered in the lobby of Wien Hall to support Columbia Community Service (CCS) at the annual Spring Get Together organized by Columbia University Facilities’ Residential Operations.

Facilities employees donated dozens of prizes including an iPad, American Express Gift Cards and Yankees tickets, which culminated in a raffle that raised nearly $3000 for CCS, which supports small, local nonprofit organizations that assist families, schools, and businesses in Upper Manhattan.

“Facilities has always been committed to supporting our neighbors, not only through our support of CCS, but also by the many people who generously donate their time to help local organizations,” said Mark Kerman, assistant vice president of residential and commercial operations for Facilities who also serves as the President of CCS.

The highlight of the event was hearing - first-hand from representatives of two local non-profit organizations - how CCS support makes a difference in the lives of community members. Carmita Padilla, executive director of Health Leads New York, explained how Columbia’s support and student volunteers help individuals obtain access to food, better living conditions, childcare, education, and income support.

Dr. Robert Houck, executive director of Friends of the Children New York, described how CCS grants helps his organization provide role models for underprivileged children in the local community; the program assigns children between the ages five to seven-mentors to guide, motivate, and advise, the mentees until age eighteen.

“Having visited many of the agencies who receive grants, I've seen the positive impact that we are able to make,” said Kerman. CCS celebrated its 65th anniversary this past year. If you would like to make a donation or find out more, please visit http://communityservice.columbia.edu

Information Sessions Connect Facilities and Community

Over the past few months, Facilities has hosted information sessions on upcoming projects for minority-, women- and locally-owned (MWL) construction firms and individuals. In January, over 150 MWL construction firms attended an information session to learn about upcoming bid opportunities at Columbia University’s Manhattanville Campus development. In February, over 200 representatives from MWL construction firms attended an information session on summer 2012 construction projects at Columbia University. In May, Facilities reached out to the community once again with information sessions for MWL construction firms and individuals on upcoming opportunities at a new University mixed-use development at 3595 Broadway.

Event attendees learned about the construction-related work that will be bid for these projects, vendor requirements, and also got an opportunity to network with Facilities project managers who will issue the requests for bids and a chance to speak with representatives from New York City business assistance organizations.

These information sessions are part of Columbia’s ongoing, significant commitment to MWL participation in construction contracting. The University has a goal of 35% construction contract spending with MWL firms, with a preference on maximizing local - 17 specific zip codes in Upper Manhattan and the South Bronx - participation.
Making Columbia Green

Columbia University Facilities is spearheading efforts to make Columbia a model environmental citizen. Below are some recent efforts to reduce energy consumption, limit our greenhouse gas emissions and incorporate environmental and energy enhancements in new construction projects.

Columbia’s Manhattanville Campus Earns LEED Platinum for Neighborhood Plan

Columbia University’s environmentally sustainable design and overall project plan for its 17-acre Manhattanville campus in West Harlem has earned LEED® Platinum under the LEED for Neighborhood Development rating system established by the U.S. Green Building Council—its highest designation and the first LEED-ND Platinum certification in New York City, as well as the first Platinum certification for a university campus plan nationally.

LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is the foremost program for buildings, homes and communities that are designed, constructed, maintained and operated for optimal environmental and human health performance.

Columbia’s long-term Manhattanville campus plan in the onetime industrial area will create an energy-efficient, pedestrian-friendly environment, with lively local retail and culture and publicly accessible green space. It will bring together members of the University and local communities, and enhance connections between West Harlem and a revitalized Hudson River waterfront.

“We are proud to have earned the LEED Platinum recognition for sustainable neighborhood development,” said University President Lee C. Bollinger. “This is a milestone for Columbia not only because we are building a future in our home community in New York, but because we are doing so with a commitment to the best urban planning principles and the highest quality architecture that reflect both the core values of city life and the fundamental need for a more sustainable society. I want to thank the leadership team at Columbia Facilities and everyone at the University who works everyday to fulfill our commitments to environmental sustainability, energy efficiency and civic responsibility.”

In 2007, Columbia entered its Manhattanville plan in the LEED for Neighborhood Development pilot program which integrates the principles of smart growth, new urbanism, and green building—the first national benchmark for neighborhood design. The rating system promotes smart location and design of neighborhoods that reduce vehicle miles traveled, and communities where jobs and services are accessible by foot or public transit.

“The LEED-ND Platinum certification is formal recognition of our commitment to sustainable design. Our objectives since the inception of the project centered on the use of smart growth principles to create an environmentally sustainable center for academic and civic life,” said Joe Ienuso, executive vice president of University Facilities. “These principles, along with learnings from the seven—and growing—LEED certified buildings across our campuses and our progressive clean construction practices will continue to guide us as we build a sustainable hub of education and economic opportunity, culture, and community. I want to thank the Manhattanville team for their extraordinary commitment and vision to make this designation possible.”

Additional strengths of the Manhattanville campus plan includes proximity to mass transit; planned mixed uses including arts, community, academic, retail and residential; open neighborhood access; green open space; pedestrian-friendly streets and sidewalks; and a commitment to best practices in clean, low-emission construction.

Before construction began, Columbia collaborated with the Environmental Defense Fund to ensure that all work applies the latest air pollution controls. Adhering to stringent environmental compliance requirements and the most advanced clean construction techniques, the University took steps to sharply reduce noise and vibrations, and traffic and business
disruptions. Low-emission equipment and washing stations for trucks departing work sites limits the impact of construction on neighborhood air quality. During demolition and abatement phases, more than 90 percent of removed materials are salvaged and recycled.

In just the last few years, seven Columbia buildings earned LEED certifications. They include environmentally sustainable renovations of the Columbia Alumni Center (Gold), Faculty House (Gold) and Knox Hall (Gold) on the Morningside Heights campus, and individual floors of the Rosenfield Building (Gold) at the Mailman School of Public Health, and the Studebaker Building (Silver) on the Manhattanville campus. Newly constructed, LEED-certified buildings include Morningside’s Northwest Corner Building (Gold) and the Gary C. Comer Geochemistry Building (Silver) on the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory campus.

Columbia University’s Northwest Corner Building Achieves LEED® Gold

Columbia University’s Northwest Corner Building has been awarded LEED® Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is the nation’s preeminent program for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. The building achieved LEED Gold certification for energy use, lighting, water and material use as well as incorporating a variety of other sustainable strategies.

The 188,000 square foot science and lab building, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect José Rafael Moneo in collaboration with the architects at Madrid’s Moneo Brock Studio and New York’s Davis Brody Bond, houses cutting-edge laboratories gathering together researchers in biology, chemistry, physics and engineering, as well as a science library, lecture hall and café. This LEED® Gold certification is particularly noteworthy due to the large number of laboratories in the 14-story building, since laboratories typically consume a great deal of energy.

“This designation is an affirmation of the innovative thinking and hard work of everyone who contributed to making this building a reality,” said Joe Ienuso, Executive Vice President of Columbia University Facilities. “It demonstrates the University’s commitment to support the frontiers of interdisciplinary teaching and research within environmentally responsible spaces.”

The LEED Gold certification was based on a number of green design and construction features including:

- Energy efficient fume hoods
- Over 20% of the building materials extracted, processed and manufactured regionally
- Approximately 84% (over 2,000 tons) of construction and demolition debris recycled
- Over 20% of the building’s materials contains recycled content
- Optimized indoor air quality
- Intelligent daylighting controls
- High-efficiency light fixtures and occupancy sensors
- Low-flow water fixtures
- Use of green cleaning products
- Enhanced commissioning, measurement and verification system that allows building staff to adjust settings to improve performance
- Design elements meet Labs21® criteria, a voluntary partnership program dedicated to improving the environmental performance of U.S. laboratories

Hyundai Sonata Hyrbid Joins Public Safety Patrol Fleet

Columbia University’s Northwest Corner Building has been Introducing the newest line of Public Safety vehicles to join the already all-hybrid fleet - the Hyundai Sonata Hybrid. These new hybrids will be used for patrol, escort, and other public safety-related services. The Sonata Hybrid achieves 37 mpg in the city and 40 mpg on the highway.
Annual Design Showcase Features NWC Building Science & Engineering Library

American Libraries, a publication of the American Library Association, unveiled their list of “the best in new and renovated library facilities.” Featured in the Library Design Showcase 2012 was Columbia University’s new Science & Engineering Library, located in the Northwest Corner Building. The environment was noted for the “special effort [made] to provide space for cooperation and collaboration, while still respecting other patrons’ desires for silence.”

CUF Executive Director of Construction Business Services Tanya Pope Honored by Professional Women in Construction

CUF Executive Director of Construction Business Services Tanya Pope (left, with AVP for Construction Business Services and Communications La-Verna Fountain) was among a group of outstanding women honored by the Professional Women in Construction (PWC) organization at its annual Salute luncheon at The Yale Club in Manhattan. Congratulations Tanya!

Facilities Tigers Win Columbia Community Service Basketball Tournament

On January 4th and 6th, teams from eight Columbia administrative departments descended on Levien Gymnasium in the Dodge Fitness Center for some fun, competitive basketball games that raised nearly $3,000 for Columbia Community Service (CCS). The Columbia University Facilities organization was well represented with teams from Facilities, Public Safety and Manhattanville participating. Facilities bested Public Safety in the semi-finals 32-28 and went on to win the championship with a 25-21 victory over the Athletics Department in a rematch of last year’s final. Of course, the real winners are the soup kitchens, after-school programs, and other worthy local nonprofits supported by CCS via direct financial aid. Congratulations to all participants!

In a close semi-final game, the Facilities Tigers (light blue) squeaked by the Public Safety Enforcers (dark blue) to advance to the finals.

Columbia University Facilities Honored for Outstanding Advocacy of the MWBE Community

Columbia University Facilities was recognized for outstanding advocacy on behalf of the Minority & Women-Owned Business Enterprise community at Anchin’s Building the Future: Celebrating MWBEs and Their Advocates. The event, sponsored by Anchin’s Construction Services Team and the Women Builders Council, Inc. in cooperation with the New York Building Congress, was held on May 3, 2012. Pictured here are CUF Executive Director of Construction Business Services Tanya Pope, Gloria Kemper, President of Recon Construction, who was one of the judges for the awards, and CUF Executive Vice President Joe Ienuso.
Public Safety Awards Ceremony Underscores Community Role in Campus Safety

On February 29, 2012, the Columbia University Department of Public Safety held its annual Promotion, Awards & Recognition Ceremony at Low Library. Along with several promotions, 23 awards were given out for perfect attendance, highlighted by Security Officer Michael Layne, who has not missed a day of work for 11 years and counting! Sergeant David Alvarez received the Ricardo Morales Crime Prevention Award. Recognition awards were given to Associate General Counsel Donna Fenn and Randy Torres for their exceptional service to the department, and students Terranisha Hiley and Akshat Pathak were recognized for their efforts helping Public Safety catch criminals, underscoring how we work as a community to keep the campus safe. University Chaplain Jewelnel Davis, Senior Executive Vice President Robert Kasdin, Executive Vice President of Facilities Joe Ienuso and Vice President of Public Safety all spoke at the event and acknowledged the hard work and dedication of the public safety team who keep our campus safe every day.

Clean + Go Green Program Wins EPA Environmental Quality Award

Columbia University Facilities’ Clean + Go Green recycling and reuse program received a 2012 U.S. EPA Environmental Quality Award at a ceremony on April 27th at EPA’s offices in Manhattan. The award - the highest recognition presented to the public by the EPA - honors significant contributions to improving the environment and public health.

Columbia University was recognized for making “great strides in promoting recycling and reducing waste through its annual “Clean + Go Green” event. Sponsored by the facilities operations of the Columbia University Morningside campus, Clean + Go Green is an event that enables and promotes community members to donate or dispose of their unwanted items in an environmentally responsible manner. In the six years since the first Clean + Go Green event, over 83 tons of items such as electronics, clothing, books and furniture have been diverted from landfills and donated to charity.”

Mayor Dana Redd of Camden, New Jersey (far left) and EPA Regional Administrator Judith Enck (far right) presented the award to Helen Bielak, manager at Columbia’s Office of Environmental Stewardship and Don Schlosser, assistant vice president of campus operations at Columbia University Facilities.
New Faces at Facilities

**Capital Project Management**
- Lorjan Agalliu, Project Manager
- Maria Bootsma, Project Manager
- Janet Grapengeter, Director, Design and Compliance
- Edward Pang, Project Manager

**Construction Business Services and Communications**
- Radhy Miranda, Project Coordinator
- Tanya Pope, Executive Director, Construction Business Services

**Finance and Administration**
- Sytyra Barrett, Human Resources Representative
- Joanna Bould, Manager of Procurement
- Cyle Timmons, Financial Coordinator

**Manhattanville**
- Charles Ng, Project Manager

**Operations**
- Natasha Aguero, Heavy Cleaner
- Shonel Arifov, Porter C
- Kennedy Calliste, Porter C
- Alejandro Cruz, Supervisor
- David Cruz, Heavy Cleaner
- Philip Duncan, Door Attendant C/ Porter C
- Abduljikadar Jakupi, Heavy Cleaner
- Peter Knoblauch, Senior Engineer

**Planning & Space Information**
- Run Mao, Building Automation Systems Administrator
- Guiseppe Mennite, Mechanic
- Randall Milner, Mechanic
- Christian Montfort, Door Attendant A
- Amidou Ouedraogo, Door Attendant C
- Christopher Pecora, Porter C
- Clarence Pennix, Truckdriver B
- Jorge Rivera, Heavy Cleaner
- Edward Septimo, Door Attendant C
- Geraldine Tan, Director of Compliance
- John Tirone, Mechanic
- Mary Waldorf, Director, Work Management and Scheduling
- Roger Ward, Manager, HVAC/ECT
- Megale Williams, Heavy Cleaner

**Public Safety**
- Stephen Carroll, Sergeant
- John William Garvey, Sergeant
- Charles Henry Henderson, Sergeant
- Frederick Ocasio, Sergeant
- Richard Ganesh Singh, Security Officer

**NEW ROLES**
- Coury Revan, Project Manager

**SILVER SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES**
Congratulations to the following on their 25th anniversary at Columbia!

**Operations**
- Frederick Basden, Mechanic B
- Corrado Centrone, Head ECT Mechanic
- Martin Chapman, Handyperson C
- David Cordero, Mechanic
- Maury Davis, Mechanic
- Erika Gaynor, Project Coordinator
- Sebastian DiPalma, Head Locksmith
- Julio Gonzalez, Mechanic Trainee
- Luis Guzman, Assistant Watch Engineer
- Richard Mingo, ECT Mechanic
- Pablo Molina Jr., Mechanic A
- Terrance Munian, Head Cleaner
- German Negron, Working Superintendent
- Ildefonso Nieves, Heavy Cleaner
- Clemente Olivo, Director, Trade Services

**Finance and Administration**
- Antonella Contrera, Director, Financial Services
- Lizbeth Rivera, HR Coordinator
- Michelle Sokoli, Associate Director, Human Resources
- Theresa Toddman, Manager, Human Resources

**Real Estate**
- Anne Lubell, Director
- Eloise Paul, Director

**New Roles**
- Capital Project Management
- Planning & Space Information
- Real Estate

Send your good news to Dan Held at dh2297@columbia.edu.
Antonia Diaz

Who She Is: Heavy Cleaner, Campus Operations

Years at Columbia: 14

What she does: Antonia is part of a team that keeps the Northwest Corner Building’s offices, classrooms, labs, and public areas clean. She works the day shift in the building, which opened in 2010 and houses cutting-edge labs gathering together researchers in biology, chemistry, physics and engineering, as well as a science library, lecture hall and café. Antonia has held several custodial positions within the University, first at the Columbia University Medical Center for two and a half years and then in residence halls on the Morningside campus for ten years.

Best part of Job:
The people. At the Northwest Corner Building, she has the opportunity to interact with both professors and students in the field of research. When she worked in residence halls, she was able to interact with and build bonds with students. “I treated them as I would want someone to treat my own children. The students would buy Christmas cards for me and wish me a happy Mother’s Day. These relationships and small acts of kindness made the job extremely enjoyable on a daily basis,” she says.

Before Columbia:
Antonia arrived in New York City from the Dominican Republic at the age of 18. She came with her parents and two siblings to take advantage of economic opportunities in the United States. Upon arrival, she enrolled in college to pursue a computer management degree but stopped attending three years into the program to help her husband and children with expenses. She worked as a full-time nanny for twelve years before accepting the custodial position at Columbia University Medical Center.

Most Memorable Moment:
Bringing my husband to the annual Christmas party at Lerner Hall. Many employees brought family members and Antonia enjoyed meeting those most important to her co-workers. This was an opportunity for her to meet different people, appreciate people’s personalities outside of work, and be comfortable around co-workers without work-related responsibilities.

In Her Spare time:
Antonia enjoys walking a mile or two daily to keep healthy and free her mind. She also values spending time with her husband of thirty-three years and six children. Her children range between the ages of fourteen and thirty-one. She looks forward to Sundays because the family gathers at her house in Westchester. She is thankful that her family honors this tradition and reserves Sundays for the family.

Other Thoughts:
Antonia takes pride in being a hard worker. Her motivation is to ensure her six children graduate from college and become successful in whichever field they choose; in fact, one of her children has worked at the Columbia Business School for the past seven years. Antonia Diaz states that she is “extremely thankful for all the wonderful things and people in my personal life and work environment. I have been fortunate enough to work with supervisors that genuinely care about the employees. I am grateful for my family, friends, and supervisors.”

Gac Filipaj

Custodial Operations’ Gac Filipaj (pictured above) made international news when he graduated from Columbia with a degree in Classics - with honors - after nearly 12 years of taking classes during the day while working at night as a heavy cleaner.
Congratulations to CUF recent graduates of degree programs, pictured here with EVP Joe Ienuso. Bottom row, left to right: Ken Morgan (EMPA); Serena Sinckler (Sustainability Management); Lindsay Doering (EMPA); Clay Bramble (Construction Administration). Top row, left to right: Dan Held (Sustainability Management); Michael Arroyo (Theological Studies); Sonnia Andrade (Accounting); Larry Wisbeski (Construction Administration); Boubacar Maiga (Conflict and Negotiation). Not pictured: Yelena Wells (Construction Administration); Gac Filipaj (Classics)

ACE in the Hole

Columbia University Facilities Manhattanville Development Group and some of its construction partners recently volunteered their time and expertise to work with a group of students from local New York City high schools as part of the ACE Mentor Program, which pairs up students with professionals to work on special projects in the architecture, construction and engineering fields. The students presented their final proposed project: a performing arts and music center called “The Grand at the Hudson Yards” at a ceremony on May 15th. After the presentations, all the students received certificates for completing the program; one student, Nora Borsare, also received a $2,000 college scholarship to study a career in the design and construction industry.

Question of the Month

What is the most generous/selfless gift you have ever received?

“The endless sacrifices my mother has made for me and my family. She underwent such a struggle and never expected anything in return.”
-Marah Arbaje
Client Service Supervisor, Campus Operation

“The gift of global awareness. A former co-worker of mine helped me reach a state of constant awareness of issues far beyond my local and immediate concerns.”
-Kerry Saunders
Public Safety Officer, Public Safety

“The gift of life. This ultimately led to my unity with my wife; our lives are now intertwined with those of our three children.”
-Stany Castillo
Laborer, Campus Operations

Summer Holidays 2012
July 4 – Independence Day
September 3 – Labor Day

is the official newsletter of Columbia University Facilities. Please submit articles, photos, announcements or story ideas to Dan Held at 212-854-8374 or dh2297@columbia.edu.