WASHINGTON, D.C.—New York dropped to sixth in the nation for its average teacher salary in 2004-05, according to the American Federation of Teachers’ (AFT) annual teacher salary survey released today. Nationally, anemic teacher salary growth continues to lag behind inflation and precludes many teachers from finding affordable housing and paying off student loans.

The average teacher salary in New York for the 2004-05 school year was $55,665, up 0.9 percent from the previous year when it was ranked third. New York was ranked fifth in the nation for beginning teacher salary, at $37,321, an increase of 2.5 percent from 2004.

The average teacher salary nationally in 2004-05 was $47,602, a 2.2 percent increase from the previous year. This falls short of the rate of inflation for that year, which was 3.4 percent. Between 2003 and 2005, the buying power of the average teacher salary decreased by almost $800.

“Given the difficulty many districts have attracting and keeping educators, the financial penalty for deciding to become a teacher is unacceptable,” said AFT President Edward J. McElroy. “If we’re serious about placing the most qualified professionals in the classroom and keeping them there, then we need to make a significant investment in teacher salaries.”

The 2005 salary survey also examines the impact of rising housing costs and student loan debt payments on teachers in America’s 50 largest cities. The study concludes that the incomes of mid-career teachers in these cities will limit them to purchasing lower-priced homes. In cities such as Seattle, Oakland, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, many career teachers will never be able to realize the middle-class dream of home ownership.

Other states in the Mid-Atlantic region ranked in the AFT survey as follows: New Jersey was ranked third in the nation, at $56,635; Pennsylvania was ninth, at $53,281; Delaware was 10th, at $52,924; and Maryland was 12th, at $52,330.

Connecticut had the highest average teacher salary, at $57,760, while South Dakota reported the lowest, at $34,039.
Good News!

- Congratulations to Susan Roger (retired/VWJHS) and her husband John. Their grandson, Miles Halsted Roger, was born on February 20, 2007. He is the son of Byron and Katie Roger (both 1994 graduates of John Jay HS), and the nephew of Kerry Roger, who teaches at John Jay.
- Tanner Matthew Sokol was born on Monday, March 12, 2007, at 8:32 p.m. 7lb. 6oz. - 20 inches. He is the son of: Kimberly Sokol (Brinckerhoff) and Jon Sokol (Sheafe Road), and the grandson of Lucille Sokol (RCK secretary).

Vassar Road Celebrates 50 Years

Vassar Road School is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. We are planning several late-spring events as part of the celebration. We are trying to track down people and pictures/information from the early days of the school.

We are looking for: 1. Former staff members who taught or worked at Vassar Road School during the late 1950’s and early 1960’s. 2. Former students who attended Vassar during its early years. 3. Contractors, construction workers, or architects who were involved in the planning and building of the school. 4. Anyone who has pictures of Vassar from its early years.

If you taught or attended Vassar Road during that time period or know someone who did, please contact the 50th Anniversary Planning Committee at Vassar Road School: 463-7860, ext. 103, or via email ThereseCoyne@wappingerschools.org. Thank you!

Business Teachers Receive Awards

In March, two Ketcham Business teachers received prestigious awards and were honored at state conferences. Maryalice Goodall received an award from the Work Experience Coordinators Association of New York State for “Outstanding Work-Based Learning Coordinator of the Year.” The award was given at the annual WECA Conference in Albany. Karen Noye received an award from DECA at the State Career Conference in Rochester for “Outstanding Service.” Congratulations to both teachers who deserved to be recognized for their dedication to Business Education.

(Pictured left to right: Maryalice Goodall; Sherrill Lazarus, Principal at Ketcham; and Karen Noye)

Dates to Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>BOE meeting - (RCK, OG, &amp; MC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>R.A. meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26 - 28</td>
<td>NYSUT's Representative Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 27</td>
<td>WCT dinner RSVP due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>payday &amp; WCT dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>BOE meeting (GY, FS, &amp; BR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>payday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 21</td>
<td>BOE meeting (KR, FP, &amp; WJH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>Give Back Day (as long as there is no more snow)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Memorial Day observed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 29</td>
<td>R.A. meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>payday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>BOE meeting (VW, EV, VR, &amp; OV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>payday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 19</td>
<td>R.A. meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The deadline for the May 4th issue is Monday, April 23rd.
Award Winning Media Artists at John Jay

By Robyn Talbot-Howard

On March 13th, a select group of John Jay students traveled to Westchester Community College to take part in the annual NYSMATA Media Arts Show. Schools from all around the lower mid-Hudson region took part in the show that included an exhibition of photography, computer art, video, and computer animation. Students also had the opportunity to attend various workshops, which included a Garage Band session run by John Jay senior Max Kohn.

The annual Media Arts Show is a showcase event for students to apply for coveted spots at the NYS Summer School for the Media Arts at Ithaca College. JJ Senior Chessa Cahill, who attended the summer school two years in a row, created an award-winning documentary illustrating the program and discussed the work of, and lifelong influence the program had on, JJ students Andrew Emma, Alexandria Coubertier, and, of course, herself.

The Photo Media program at John Jay is proud to announce its students who were recognized as “Exemplary Media Artists” at the show in photography: Chessa Cahill (video and photography), Alexandria Coubertier, Chanelle Santilli (computer art and photography), Samantha Rosenhagen, Elizabeth Keller, Lauren Keller, Shanna O’Leary, Becky Fox, Max Kohn, Marc Prine, and Jennifer Avis (who also won the Audience Choice Award for “Best Landscape”).

(The above photo was taken by JJ senior Jennifer Avis. It was voted “Audience Choice Award: Best Landscape.” It is a b&w infrared photograph.)

JJ Students Attend Regional Spelling Bee

Two John Jay High School students made it to the final round of the 15th annual Literacy Connections Regional Spelling Bee, held March 14 at Marist College. Nina Zhu and Sruti Akella, both 11th graders, were one of the few high school teams to spell all words correctly in the first seven rounds, which qualified them to spell in the final round. The team progressed far into the final round, until they missed the word “panoply.”

The Wappingers Congress of Teachers sponsored the entry fee for their team. Nina and Sruti were one of four teams of spellers that had been chosen to represent John Jay after a school-wide spelling bee organized by Ms. Teresa Sutton and Mrs. Cathy Holbrook, English teachers. The others and their sponsoring organizations included: Jennifer Gass and Laura Santiago (Karin Laeben), Margaret Barbera and Malika Chattapalli (DOT Federal Credit Union), and Steve Lenert and Al Masino (Dutchess United Educators). John Jay’s Interact Club chose Louis Galarza and Jimmy Lyles to spell for their sponsor, the Rotary Club of East Fishkill and Fishkill.

(10 JJHS Spelling Bee participants and Ms. Teresa Sutton)
DISPOSITION OF DECEDENT’S REMAINS

By: Mirkin & Gordon, P.C.

The New York State Legislature has amended the Public Health Law to add §4201 which creates a hierarchy of individuals who have the right to dispose of a decedent’s remains upon their death. First priority is given to the person who has been specifically designated by the decedent in writing to carry out his/her wishes in this regard. The written designation must be in substantially the form set forth in the statute entitled Appointment of Agent to Control Disposition of Remains.

Prior to the enactment of §4201, there was no legally recognized document by which a person could designate a particular person to dispose of his/her remains. Although the decedent’s wishes could be incorporated in one’s Will, the Will would not be probated for some time after the decedent’s death. Unfortunately, this often exacerbated ill-will and consternation among family members and loved ones at an already sensitive time.

Notably, the new law gives a decedent’s Domestic Partner the same priority/hierarchy as a spouse – i.e. just below that of a designated agent. The term “Domestic Partner” is broadly defined to include a legally recognized domestic partnership or one based upon mutual financial and emotional interdependence.

Absent a properly executed Appointment of Agent, the following persons, in descending priority, have the right to control the disposition of the decedent’s remains:

- The decedent’s surviving spouse/domestic partner;
- Any of the decedent’s surviving children eighteen years of age or older;
  - Either of the decedent’s surviving parents;
  - Any of the decedent’s surviving siblings eighteen years of age or older;
  - A court appointed guardian; or
- A duly appointed representative of the decedent’s estate.

Should there be interest, the Legal Plan has included in its coverage the Appointment of Agent to Control Disposition of Remains. Thus, an appointment with an attorney to discuss your needs and concerns in this regard can be arranged while also reviewing your current Will and health care directives to ensure that they are adequate and properly reflect your current desires and intentions.

*Interestingly, however, the statute corrects that problem by retroactively validating directions regarding the disposition of one’s remains in Wills executed prior to the statute’s enactment regardless of whether such will is probated or subsequently declared invalid. Thus, all actions taken reasonably and in good faith based on those Wills’ authorizations are valid.

MIRKIN & GORDON, P.C.
98 Cutter Mill Road, Suite 310N
Great Neck, NY 11021
(516) 466-6030 • (718) 895-7160 • (914) 997-1576
End of Year Party:
“The Union that works together, plays together.”

When: May 4, 2007
Where: Sinapi’s Arbor Ridge, Hopewell Junction
Time: 6 PM - 11 PM

Butler Cocktail Hour & Open Bar all evening
Live Entertainment by Spiral
Penne ala Vodka; salad; choice of Prime Rib, Chicken Marsala, or Salmon in a lemon caper sauce; Coffee Table; Cake; full Viennese Table.

Price: $50 per person
RSVP: April 27, 2007 to WCT with choice of dinner and payment

FOR SALE: 2 BR, 1 bath on large lot in town of Saugerties, NY. Move-in conditions, detached garage. Walk to river and park, close to Catskills. Asking $148,900. MLS 20063533. Call Henry Sobeck, Licensed Real Estate Broker (845) 256-6577 or e-mail tatydelph@aol.com.

FOR RENT: 1 bedroom, EIK, living room, off street parking. Utilities included. Washer/Dryer hookup. Convenient to all! Please call Victoria @ (845)337-4784. Arlington/Poughkeepsie Town $975.

FOR SALE: One (1) Mount Saint Mary Graduate level course voucher valued at $1800.00, will sell for $1200.00 OBO; Sony 27” color WEAG Trinitron TV, like new, $150.00; Brooksonic 13” TV, color, DVD VHS combo, like new, $50.00; Bennington Pine Rocker, $100.00. Call 896-7664.

FOR SALE: Man’s dresser, ladies’ dresser in good condition. Best offer. Call Herb @297-5657.

FOR SALE: 3 credits for Mt. St. Mary’s College course for $800.00. Contact Madonna Ray @ 845-227-4540.

FOR SALE: 3 credits for Mt. St. Mary’s College course for $800.00. Contact Madonna Ray @ 845-227-4540.

MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS

McGuiney Fencing
Mark D’Onofrio
Sean Keenan
Free Estimates - 914.490.5854
Over 20 Years Experience
Specializing in pools & residential fencing
Wood, Vinyl, Aluminum, & Chain Link
Very Reasonable Prices

FOR SALE: Man’s dresser, ladies’ dresser in good condition. Best offer. Call Herb @297-5657.

FOR SALE: One (1) Mount Saint Mary Graduate level course voucher valued at $1800.00, will sell for $1200.00 OBO; Sony 27” color WEAG Trinitron TV, like new, $150.00; Brooksonic 13” TV, color, DVD VHS combo, like new, $50.00; Bennington Pine Rocker, $100.00. Call 896-7664.


Contact: Memory Lane D.J.
Services - Mr. Ramirez,
Wappingers Jr. High Phone #: 845-255-6732

Continued on page 6
MEMBERS’ CLASSIFIED ADS (continued from page 5)

Free Estimates
Chris Capasso
Interior & Exterior Painting
Gutter Cleaning, Roofing, Siding, Windows
Power Washing & Staining
Phone 845-242-8228

FOR SALE: SUNY New Paltz voucher
FOR SALE. $250 towards any class. Will sell for $200. Must be an employee of the district. Please call 298-9109.


Spook Hill Frames
We will frame almost anything! 10% WCT discount at all times! Call 297-1956

Like to Travel? Book Online!
www.reimertravel.com
Vacations, Getaways, Cruises, Rental Cars, Flowers, & More!

It’s a buyer’s market in SW Florida! Beautiful new condos, houses, or realistically priced resales from the 150’s. Call anytime with questions or e-mail for a list of properties to meet your specifications. Linda and Neil Cahill, EXIT Realty, greater Ft. Myers/Naples area. Call (914)-475-4484 or (239)-369-5639; Neil@exitirealty.com.

SHIRLEY ROSICKE
PHOTOGRAPHY
PORTRAITS
Seniors, Families, Children
Created in the studio or on location
Specializing in
WEDDING Photography.
Shirley Rosicke
845-226-5019
www.ROSICKE.com

Never Clean Your Gutters Again®
Gutter Protection Systems
The First. The Best. The #1 Gutter Protection System in the World
Joe Schmid - (845) 297-0500
www.gutterhelmet.com
gutterhelmet@verizon.net
*Special 15% discount to WCT Members

LITTLE DEPOT
Lionel, Williams, K-Line Trains
6000 part inventory
REPAIR SERVICE
by appointment only
OLD TRAINS BOUGHT
thelittledepot@earthlink.net
845-226-5019

FOR RENT: Falmouth, Cape Cod. Fully equipped 3BR, 2 bath duplex on quiet cul-de-sac. 5 min. walk to Vineyard Sound beach, walk to town. Sleeps 6, no smoking, no pets. Available 7/7-14 and some weeks in August. $1800 per week. Call Bill McCabe at 223-5734 or e-mail wmc1226@frontiernet.net.

FOR SALE:
SUNY New Paltz voucher
FOR SALE. $250 towards any class. Will sell for $200. Must be an employee of the district. Please call 298-9109.


Spook Hill Frames
We will frame almost anything! 10% WCT discount at all times! Call 297-1956

Like to Travel? Book Online!
www.reimertravel.com
Vacations, Getaways, Cruises, Rental Cars, Flowers, & More!

It’s a buyer’s market in SW Florida! Beautiful new condos, houses, or realistically priced resales from the 150’s. Call anytime with questions or e-mail for a list of properties to meet your specifications. Linda and Neil Cahill, EXIT Realty, greater Ft. Myers/Naples area. Call (914)-475-4484 or (239)-369-5639; Neil@exitirealty.com.

KEEL SYSTEMS, LLC
Computer Setup/Repair/Improvements
Software Setup and Instruction
Virus/Spyware Protection, Detection & Removal
Data Backup & Recovery
Networks: Wired/Wireless
Mobile Computing (Laptops/PDAs)
Digital Photography/VHS to DVD
Ed McKenna
845-471-7607
Edmundmckenna@optonline.net

43 days left in the 2006-2007 school year