In a period of continuing financial uncertainty, the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences has sustained ongoing initiatives and added new ones to the roster of its accomplishments over the past six months. During this period, the college has devoted considerable effort to the preparation of the Comprehensive Institutional Self-Study for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, a task that demanded the attention of a large number of Weissman personnel; and many of our recent projects, such as the Freshman Learning Communities and the assessment of our programs, are described at length in the pages of that document. At the same time, we have continued to build our reputation as an intellectual center by hosting a range of public events; we have found ways, even in these lean times, to expand our faculty and to support their scholarship; we have received an assortment of fellowships, grants, and awards; and we have expanded our contributions to the cultural life of the college.

**Weissman as an Intellectual Center**

Following last spring’s enormously successful installment of the Addison Gayle Memorial Lecture, featuring a talk by Gloria Steinem, the Department of English has planned an event on April 20th that will turn the spotlight on the namesake of the series, Addison Gayle, Jr. This occasion, a workshop to be conducted by the editor of *The Addison Gayle Reader*, Professor Nathaniel Norment, Jr. of Temple University, will provide a welcome opportunity to assess the achievement of our late colleague, one of the key figures in the Black Arts movement, and to celebrate his memory.

The Global Studies initiative continues this semester with the first offering of a new course entitled “Globalization, Past, Present, and Future,” which is being taught by Dean Peck with weekly guest visits from a group of Weissman faculty: Professors John Brenkman (English), Dov Waxman (Political Science), Gene Park (Political Science), Katrin Hansing (Black and Hispanic Studies), Shelley Eversley (English), Joshua Mills (Journalism and the Writing Professions), Alison Griffiths (Communication Studies), Timothy Hoellein (Natural Sciences), Ken Guest and Glenn Petersen (Sociology/Anthropology). In addition to this course, the Global Studies initiative has included a series of visiting lecturers—most recently, a talk entitled “Higher Education and the Quest for Global Citizenship” by study-abroad specialist Ross Lewin—as well as a conference on the topic of “Diversity and Internationalization.”

The Weissman School celebrated a significant curricular milestone with the recent passage of the Biology major by the CUNY Board of Trustees. For the first time in its history, the school will now offer a major in one of the natural sciences on a permanent, rather than an ad hoc, basis; and the Department of Natural Sciences has further expanded its offerings with the creation of a Tier III minor in Physics. Moreover, the Weissman School’s Curriculum Committee, working with the School of Public Affairs and the Zicklin School, has created a program that will permit qualified BA Economics majors to earn a Master of Public Administration degree in only five years (as opposed to the usual six) by taking a selection of graduate courses in their senior year as undergraduates. Recognizing that the contemporary job market increasingly demands a graduate degree of would-be professionals, the designers of the five-year program have made it possible
for some of our best students to compete effectively for a range of public sector positions with only one additional year of study.

**Recruitment of New Faculty**

In spite of the considerable financial challenges of the past year, the Weissman School has again succeeded in filling a number of crucial faculty positions. Next year, Professor James Gatheral, who has been described as one of the top five practitioners of his discipline in the world, will join the Department of Mathematics on the faculty of our graduate program in Financial Engineering. The Department of Natural Sciences has hired experimental physicist Professor Stefan Bathe on a cluster line funded partly by the Brookhaven National Laboratory and partly by the office of CUNY’s Vice Chancellor for Research, Dr. Gillian Small. The Department of Fine and Performing Arts is currently conducting a search in the area of New Media to fill a line funded by the Macaulay Honors College, and French Historian Professor Minayo Nasiali has accepted an offer to join the Department of History as an assistant professor in the fall of 2011. During this academic year, six different departments are conducting searches to find permanent occupants for seven CUNY COMPACT lines. Thus far, two of these searches have been successfully completed: Jarrod Pickens will join our faculty as Lecturer in Mathematics, and Shigeru Suzuki will be Assistant Professor of Japanese in the Department of Modern Languages and Comparative Literature.

**Awards, Fellowships, Grants, and Support for Scholarship**

In the last six months, our faculty, our students, and the school itself have all enjoyed success in the competition for grants and awards. Professor Walter Wang has been honored with the 2009 CUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Mathematics Instruction, which he will receive on October 29th at the annual reception for new faculty at the CUNY Graduate Center; and Professor Sandeep Sreekumar of the Department of Philosophy is this year’s winner of the Whiting Teaching Award. Among our students, Master’s candidate Mr. Daniel Forman has become the first winner of the Salih Neftci Memorial Scholarship, which was awarded by the Financial Engineering Alumni Committee (a special mention was given to Mr. Peter Salzman). For the first time ever, Baruch College was invited to nominate students to compete for the prestigious Jeannette K. Watson Fellowship. Of the four candidates whom we put forward for the competition, two—Ms. Renelle Lawrence and Ms. Patrycja Ajdukiewicz—succeeded in winning fellowships. Finally, the Weissman School has been named a semi-finalist in the national Creative Campus Innovation Grants competition. Baruch’s entry, jointly conceived by Dean Peck and BPAC Director John Malatesta, is entitled “Performing Diaspora: Identities in Motion”; it was one of 31 projects selected from a field of 150 applicants. The final proposal was submitted on March 1st.

CUNY and the Weissman School have provided support for faculty scholarship in the form of fellowship leaves, released time, and travel funds. Six of our faculty members have received 80% fellowship leaves, and one has received a half-year leave at full pay. In addition, forty-five Weissman faculty members have been awarded released time for spring or fall 2010, and a total of $85,000 has been distributed in travel funds.
Promotion of Cultural Activities

This year the Sydney Mishkin Gallery, under the direction of Sandra Kraskin, became a part of the Weissman School and saw its attendance reach a record high, with 300 people attending the opening reception of *Mercedes Matter: A Retrospective* (the show has also been seen by more than 600 Freshman Seminar students). *The Wall Street Journal* called this exhibition “A New York School Standout” in a major review; the show was also reviewed in *Artforum* magazine online. To accompany the exhibition, a 275-page hardcover book with four scholarly essays was produced in conjunction with the Mishkin Gallery. The exhibition will now travel to museums in California, East Hampton, and Iowa.

The Sydney Harmon Writer-in-Residence this spring is poet Major Jackson, who read from his work on March 16th. Last fall the position was held by novelist, playwright, and screenwriter Joseph O’Connor.

The Baruch Performing Arts Center (BPAC) has presented a variety of performing arts events for Baruch students, faculty, staff, and alumni, as well as the local neighborhood and general public. The debut performance in the Nagelberg Theater of the fall 2009 Season included an eight-week run of *The Buddha Play*, written and performed by Evan Brenner. Based on the Pali Canon, this was a one-man show about the life of Siddhartha, the man who became known as the Buddha. In the fall of 2009, the National Yiddish Theater Folksbiene became BPAC’s new resident theater company and brought the debut of another one-man show to the Nagelberg stage: legendary theater actor Theodore Bikel in *Sholom Aleichem: Laughter through Tears*, which ran for six sold-out and critically-acclaimed weeks. During that time, Folksbiene also staged their Kids & Yiddish series, a cabaret benefit, and several staged readings of new works. Other theatrical selections have included the Great Works Reading Series presentation of *Tartuffe* and the Master Works Reading Series presentation of *A Doll’s House*. Finally, BPAC co-created a new children’s play with One-Time Productions entitled *Baba Yaga and the Pumpkin Fairy*, based on a Russian folk tale.

The college’s resident chamber music group, The Alexander String Quartet, celebrated the 200th anniversaries of Mendelssohn and Schumann, and the Silberman Concert series offered lecture-demonstrations by the Quartet for almost 1,000 Baruch students in the fall, as well as the Ortner-Roberts Duo, a group that has fused Harlem stride piano with klezmer clarinet music. The Milt Hinton Jazz Series began its 18th season with Brazilian jazz by Trio Da Paz and a special lecture from Latin-jazz percussionist Bobby Sanabria. A new series entitled the Concert Meister Series included Albena Danailova of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, Roman Spitzer of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, and Glenn Dicterow of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, among others. The India Center sponsored classical and folk Indian music and dance, and Harrice Miller Entertainment also brought a concert of classical Indian music.

The musical season also included solo pianist Elisha Abas, the New York City Classical Guitar Society concerts, the New York Piano Society, and a special winter concert by eight-time platinum recording artist George Winston. The third season of Weissman Talks included an interview with Theo Bikel and a special film screening of the critically-acclaimed 1975 film
*Hester Street*, followed by a lively discussion with the film’s director and writer, Joan Micklin Silver. BPAC also presented the Baruch College Choir in a concert of traditional holiday music.

With these and other offerings, the Weissman School and the Baruch Performing Arts Center continue to make an essential contribution to the cultural life of Baruch College and of New York City.