

The Association of Retired Faculty and Professional Staff

Emeritus News

Summer 2024

► My Corner

By Barbara Mallette

"There is no science in this world like physics. Nothing comes close to the precision with which physics enables you to understand the world around you. It's the laws of physics that allow us to say exactly what time the sun is going to rise. What time the eclipse is going to begin. What time the eclipse is going to end."
Neil deGrasse Tyson



Fur is flying after April 8th posts on Instagram and X (formerly Twitter). The *Buffalo News* reported that Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz fled to Ashtabula Ohio to view the recent solar eclipse. Critics cited Poloncarz's requests for businesses to close and urge for folks to remain home to avoid traffic jams. Even a declaration of a state of emergency was being contemplated before the event. Poloncarz just wanted to be beyond the predicted cloud cover in the Buffalo area and headed for a clear skies area. But the cloudy skies didn't seem to dampen the eclipse spirit here. Although reports of visitors to Western New York didn't reach the millions predicted, there was noticeably more people in Chautauqua County the weekend before and during the eclipse.

Our group decided that clouds were not going to hamper our gathering. We prepared to have a feast before the event, so that we were fueled for the experience, and held off the desert buffet until after the eclipse ended. Multiple internet sources provided us with details about the

eclipse - when it would start, when

totality was reached, when the event was over. Everyone was equipped with eclipse glasses but we soon realized that we could see nothing through the glasses because of the amount of cloud cover. Glasses came off and we squinted

for a few minutes before the clouds started to thin. Putting on the glasses, we noticed that we could see a sliver of sun peeking



out from the moon's shadow; some called it a fingernail. Cheers were sounded and truly the celebration began. Our neighbor captured the eclipse through his special glasses; of course, he played Bonnie Tyler's *Total Eclipse of the Heart* to set the mood.



All present agreed about the awesomeness of the event. We were not disappointed. A brief shower began as totality was reached. Light diminished; we were in the dark, with an almost 360-degree sunset at the horizon visible from our vantage

point. The temperature dropped. Birds seemed to stop chirping and appeared to remain still. The clouds dissipated as totality was ending. We knew we were experiencing a rare phenomenon. For some of us, this total solar eclipse may be the last we will see in our lifetimes. Spending the day with loved ones certainly added to the wonder. Mr. Poloncarz missed an opportunity in Western New York!



"Three things cannot be long hidden: The sun, the moon, and the truth."
Buddha

Please email Dawn Hunt at dawn.hunt@fredonia.edu or call 716-673-3456 if you are interested in receiving the Emeritus newsletter by email.

► Additional Information

- ◆ Check out the variety of events that are offered at the University through the end of the semester and beyond: <https://events.fredonia.edu>.

From Glenn Miller's "St. Louis Blues" and Tony Bennett's "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" to Nat King Cole's "Route 66" and Gladys Night's "Midnight Train to Georgia," hundreds of songs have been written about famous American cities, states and places.

Rockefeller Arts Center's 2024 Commencement-Eve Pops will cover these tunes and more with "A Big Musical Tour of America" on Friday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m. in King Concert Hall at SUNY Fredonia. Tickets are available online 24/7. Tickets may also be purchased on Monday, Wednesday or Friday by phone at (716) 673-3501 or in person at the Fredonia Ticket Office in the Williams Center.

► Commencement

- ◆ Volunteers are needed for Commencement 2024. Commencement is scheduled for Saturday, May 18th. There are three opportunities for you to get involved! The campus is looking for volunteers in any and all shifts:
 - 8 am -12:30 pm - Morning Ceremony Shift
 - 1 pm-5:30 pm - Afternoon Ceremony Shift
 - 8 am-5:30 pm - Both Ceremonies

If you are interested in volunteering, please complete the following [online form](#). If you have trouble completing the form or have questions about volunteering, please email Scott.Saunders@fredonia.edu.

► Save the Date

- ◆ **Fall Emeritus Luncheon**, College Lodge, **October 16th**. We are returning to the College Lodge as you requested. Fingers crossed for a beautiful fall day!
- ◆ **Homecoming Weekend!** October 20-22, 2023. For event details, please check out the following website: <https://events.fredonia.edu/homecoming>

Informational Website

Retired Public Employees Association – <https://rpea.org/> - Sign up for informational emails and RPEA newsletters.

► Emeritus Group Happy Hour

A New Event For Us



21 Brix Winery
6654 West Main
Road, Portland,
NY



Wednesday, June 12, 2024
3 to 6 pm

Because you requested it, we are hosting a happy hour at a local winery. Please join members of the Emeritus Group, their partners, and friends on **Wednesday, June 12th** for our next Emeriti event. We will be meeting at 21 Brix to mingle and snack on hors d'oeuvres (provided by our own FSA). A cash bar available at 21 Brix. They sell a variety of wine, beer, and non-alcoholic beverages.

Come and enjoy this informal gathering on an almost summer's day!

To cover the cost of hors d'oeuvres and tableware, please send your reservation and check payable to Emeritus Group for \$10 per person by June 1st to:

Barbara Mallette
PO Box 328
Cassadaga, NY 14718

We look forward to seeing you all.
—Barbara and Doug



Detach here and mail to Barbara.



Name (s) _____

Number attending

Enclosed is a check (payable to Emeritus Group) for

\$ _____

(by June 1st please)

► SUNY Chancellor's Award for Student Excellence

This award is the highest among the student awards in SUNY and acknowledges the outstanding achievements that students have demonstrated by integrating the SUNY standards of excellence in academics, leadership, campus involvement, community service, and the arts.

Amanda Keppel



Amanda Keppel is a senior from Clarence, NY and graduated from Clarence Central High School. Amanda is double majoring in Communication Disorders and Sciences (CDS) and English with a School and Counseling Psychology Minor. After graduating this Spring from Fredonia, Amanda aims to pursue a Master's degree in Speech Language Pathology.

Chloe Kowalyk



Chloe Kowalyk is a senior double majoring in Communications: Journalism and Psychology with minors in English and Political Science. Chloe is from Depew, NY, and a graduate of Depew High School. After graduating this spring, she plans on continuing into law school in pursuit of her goal to become an attorney and provide legal aid to women in need.

► Lanford Presidential Prize

Generously created and endowed by the late President Emeritus Oscar E. Lanford and Mrs. Lanford through the Fredonia College Foundation, the award recognizes a member of each graduating class who has exhibited balanced achievement and exemplifies Fredonia ideals.

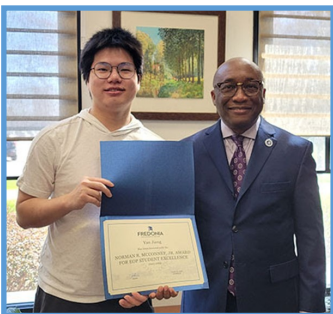


Patience Glatt

Patience Glatt is a senior, majoring in Psychology with a Biology and Chemistry focus. She is from Jamestown, NY and graduated from Jamestown High School. After graduating from SUNY Fredonia this Spring, she plans on attending Kentucky College of Optometry to earn a Doctor of Optometry degree, her lifelong dream. She currently works as a medical scribe at 716 Eye Care in Fredonia.

► Norman R. McConney, Jr., Award for Student Excellence

This award recognizes outstanding EOP students for their academic excellence and strength in overcoming significant personal obstacles throughout their lives. It is named in memory of Norman R. McConney, Jr. (1946-2016), a graduate of the University at Albany and former Assistant Dean for Special Programs at SUNY. McConney, alongside former Assembly Deputy Speaker Arthur O. Eve, helped create the EOP as a statewide program that has served over 75,000 New Yorkers from underprivileged backgrounds.



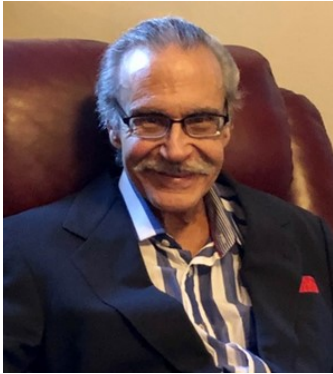
Yan Jiang

Yan Jian is a sophomore double majoring in Public Accountancy and Business Administration - Finance, and as part of his undergraduate program, he will complete the requirement to earn his Certified Public Accountant (CPA) licensure. He is from New York City and graduated from New Utrecht High School.

► Emeritus Spotlight — Dr. Ray Belliotti

By Barbara Mallette and Ray Belliotti

"I'm glad I don't play anymore. I could never learn all those handshakes."
Phil Rizzuto



The small village of Dansville was unaware that a star was created when Raymond Angelo Belliotti was born. Even Clara Barton's founding of the Red Cross pales to the accomplishments of Dr. Belliotti. Ray grew up in Dansville surrounded by a large Italian family. Mrs. Belliotti's (Luisa) first language was Sicilian; she attended American schools through eighth grade in Mount Morris. Leaving the educational system allowed her to work and to contribute her earnings to support her parents and eight siblings. Mr. Belliotti (Angelo) was a star football and baseball player, earning him status in Mount Morris. After high school graduation, Angelo, owned a barber shop located downtown in the village of Dansville. For fifty years, Angelo operated the shop, often with his father (Ray's grandfather) at his side. Brother Joe, Principal of Mount Morris High School, worked in the shop on Saturdays. Angelo discouraged Ray from working in the three-chair shop to squelch any notion of Ray learning the trade and altering his trajectory for college. The March 24, 2021 issue of the *Evening Tribune* (Hornell, NY) heralded the inauguration of a new business in Angelo's barbershop, Angie's Ice Cream Shoppe (Angie's closed this past April, indicating a move to another state). Still, diehard locals remember the location as Angelo's barbershop. The

Belliotti family lived in a one-bedroom apartment above the barbershop. Ray remembers sleeping in a corner of his parents' bedroom while his sister slept on the foldout couch in the living room.

Ray recalled his youth fondly. He remarked, "I grew up among gamblers, learning to play poker at an early age and reading the racing form well before I hit puberty. By the time I was twelve, I played cards and wagered on horses regularly." And he indicated that his favorite Broadway musical was *Guys and Dolls*. Ray admitted that school was second to sports; he was an enthusiastic athlete, playing baseball, basketball, bowling, and sandlot football through his high school years. From an early age, Ray has been an avid baseball fan, particularly the New York Yankees. He dreamed of being a shortstop for his favorite team but reality thwarted any desire to pursue baseball as a career.

Land outside Dansville is prime for growing vegetables, trees, and flowers. Ray spent a number of summers working in the nursery fields as well as on construction crews. This physical labor opened Ray's eyes to other career possibilities. The notion of going to college and earning a degree became a priority. Following completion of his studies in high school, Ray enrolled in the Philosophy Program at Union College in Schenectady, graduating with honors. Following college, Ray, like many of his agemates, had to face the reality of the Vietnam War and military service. Playing the odds, Ray enlisted in the US Army and trained for a military intelligence specialty. After completing his three-year military commitment, Ray headed to a graduate program at the University of Miami. He earned a Master's of Arts Degree in philosophy and taught undergraduates as a teaching assistant. The program and weather seemed to agree with Ray, as he remained in Miami to complete his doctorate. His academic record speaks to Ray's intelligence prowess (perfect academic record for both degrees: GPA 4.0). and commitment to academic life. During his graduate program, Ray was also an adjunct instructor at Miami-Dade Community College.

You may be wondering why did Ray select philosophy and continued this focus at the Master's and Doctoral level at the University of Miami? In his own words, Ray reflected, "For as long as I can remember, the most important question was 'How should I live my life?' Studying philosophy has allowed me to ponder that fundamental question, teach a variety of answers to it, and write what I hope are contributions to the ongoing discussion. I never felt that being a philosophy professor was a job. Instead, it was a lifelong opportunity to think, write, and teach about the most crucial issues pervading human life."

Teaching at the college level intrigued Ray. As a result of his experience at Miami-Dade Community College, Ray sought other positions in higher education, landing an Adjunct Assistant Professorship at Florida International University for two years before moving to Richmond for a position at Virginia Commonwealth University. Even though the university classroom met a need, the allure of student life was just too great for a young professor. Always up for a challenge and for pushing the odds, Ray enrolled in the law program at Harvard University. Here he not only took required coursework but also was a teaching fellow. Hear about his degree completion from Ray himself, "After three years, despite his protests, he [Ray] was forcibly removed from Harvard under the absurd theory that he had completed his J.D. degree."

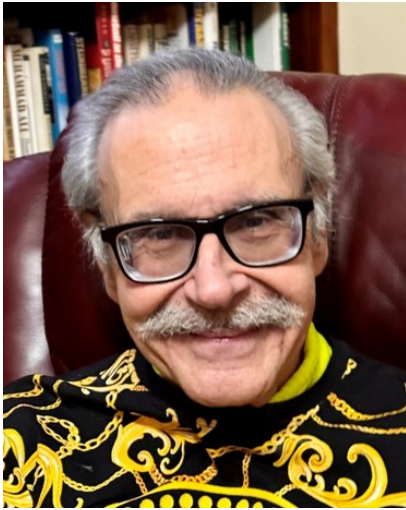
With four degrees in hand as well as attorney license, Ray moved back to his home state, securing a position with the Wall Street firm Barrett Smith Schapiro Simon & Armstrong. Living in New York City was a far cry from his endeared Dansville. The hustle of an attorney's life was exciting and lucrative for a few years but the appeal of returning to campus life was just too strong for this young lawyer. Offers from a number of Institutions of Higher Education, some of which were located in warm climates, were tempting but Ray accepted a position at the State University of New York at Fredonia in 1984.



"Everyone sees what you appear to be, few experience what you really are."
Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

► Emeritus Spotlight—*continued*

Ray settled into life in Chautauqua County quickly. Perhaps his experiences in a small village as a young man helped him ease into the laid-back nature of our area but it didn't take Ray long to make his mark on campus. In his thirty-four year career at Fredonia, Ray has been an extremely active faculty member serving on departmental, division, campus and system-wide committees as well as faculty governance. He was faculty advisor to two undergraduate student groups: the Philosophical Society and *Il Circolo Italiano*. In addition, Ray served as Chair of the Philosophy Department for seven years. His teaching prowess as well as exceptional scholarship have been recognized on a number of occasions. In 1991, Ray earned the University's William T. Hagan Award for Excellence in Research and Scholarship and SUNY's Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching. Four years later, Ray was awarded Fredonia's Kasling Lecture Award for Excellence in Research and Scholarship. The University and SUNY recognized Ray again in 1999, bestowing on him the rank of Distinguished Teaching Professor. The SUNY Research Foundation also determined Ray to be an exceptional scholar; it conferred on him the SUNY Research Foundation Scholarship Recognition Award in 2002.



With 26 books published and almost 100 articles and reviews, Ray is a renowned academic and one revered in his field. He has presented at state, national and international conferences. And he was a featured lecturer on the *Queen Elizabeth 2* ocean liner! Although he retired in 2018, Ray continues to be active in his profession, serving as a member of the International Editorial Advisory Board, Political Philosophy, Cambridge Scholars Publishing; a member of the SUNY Distinguished Academy Visiting Scholars Program and SUNY Distinguished Academy; member of the Editorial Board, Rodopi Editions Value Inquiry Book Series; and member of the Editorial Advisors Board, Philosophy Now (Great Britain).

The 1980s decade was a milestone for Ray. He secured the position at Fredonia and finished in the top 9% of runners in the 1984 New York City Marathon. He continued to run marathons, half-marathons, and 10K races but he couldn't run from love. In 1986, Ray married a talented artist (and now former art teacher), Marcia Helen Dalby (Yes, she is the sculptor of the horse that decorates the porch of the Belliotti home on Central Avenue!). Ray and Marcia raised two children in their Fredonia home, Angelo and Vittoria.

As Ray muses about his loss of marathon races, baseball skills, and hair, he summarized his time at Fredonia much better than I could attempt: "I am deeply grateful to SUNY Fredonia and its philosophy department for allowing me the opportunity to forge a career that was

relatively undemanding, mostly free from officious intermeddlers, adequately compensated, with massive amounts of leisure time. I have always endured two signature shortcomings: (1) laziness and (2) fierce resistance to authority outside the family structure. I knew at a young age that finding suitable employment would be difficult. I sought a job that would not confine me from 9:00 am-5:00 pm; that would not subordinate me to a boss daily; that was legal; and one that paid decently. This narrowed my prospects considerably. Thank you, SUNY Fredonia!"

Please feel free to check Ray out at his website: <https://raymondangelobelliotti.com>.

This quote from Joe DiMaggio inspired Ray's daily classroom teaching: When asked why he played so hard even after a game's outcome was determined, Joe replied, "Because some fan might be seeing me for the first or last time. I owe them my best."

► In Memoriam of Campus Employees

Dr. Mira Berkley passed away on February 14, 2024.

Dr. Berkley joined the State University of New York at Fredonia in 2000 as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the School of Education and was appointed in 2001 as an Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education. She was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in 2006, served for multiple years as the Coordinator of the Early Childhood Program, and was Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction from 2011-2014. Dr. Berkley retired in 2015 after a distinguished career, and she is remembered by her colleagues as being central to the Early Childhood Education Program. She also had a passion for travel, which she shared with her students through her work with study abroad programs. Dr. Berkley's colleagues wish to share additional details about her life and work [here](#). Online condolences may be made at larsontimkofuneralhome.com.

Mr. Peter Komada, Jr. passed away on Friday, February 23, 2024.

Mr. Komada joined the State University of New York at Fredonia in 1980 as a Programmer/Analyst in Computing Services and was later appointed Senior Programmer Analyst. He held this position until his retirement in 2006.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations be made to the American Legion Post #62, 211 Central Avenue, Dunkirk, or Dunkirk Historical Museum, 513 Washington Avenue, Dunkirk, NY.