Distinguished Professors Biographies – Community College

**Distinguished Teaching Professorship**

**Richard Firenze** – Richard Firenze has a distinguished 40-year career at Broome Community College characterized by an unrelenting commitment to teaching excellence and scholarship. He is an exemplary educator whose instruction is informed by exceptional knowledge and skills in the biological sciences. He has taught and developed, or helped to develop, fourteen courses and, through every course, he has pulled a common thread – Darwin’s theory of evolution. That theory pervades his teaching and is the hallmark of his orientation as an educator, researcher, and administrator. These significant contributions, particularly in the area of evolution and the nature of science, were recognized in 2002 when he received the prestigious Friend of Darwin Award at the annual meeting of the American Institute of Biological Sciences.

**Bernard Gorman** – Professor Gorman has had an outstanding career as an educator, scholar, author and international expert in psychology, research design and statistical analysis. He is a master teacher who is highly respected by his students and colleagues. With lectures that are thought provoking and inspiring, Dr. Gorman imprints a lasting legacy on his students—a legacy demonstrated by the students who write about the impact that he has had on their academic lives and professional careers. The software he has written is used throughout the world and attests to the fact that Dr. Gorman embraces technology and is continually weaving technological innovations into his presentations. He has received numerous awards and honors. Although he has achieved abounding success as a textbook author, as an author of scholarly research papers, and as a sought out lecturer, it is the motivation and success of his students that continues to be his first priority.

**Distinguished Service Professorship**

**Barbara Connolly** – Professor Connolly has served Westchester Community College and its students for thirty years bringing the highest level of academic excellence to all. She chairs the largest department on campus, Behavioral and Social Sciences. She is also the Advisor to the Alpha Iota Omicron chapter of Phi Theta Kappa, the two-year college honor society which she founded. Her work with curricula is outstanding and she is currently responding to student needs by developing a new curriculum in Global Studies. She has created many articulation agreements with other colleges helping students to easily transfer. She has also developed many online courses offered by the College and responds to community needs by providing courses in many extension sites throughout the County. She is a recognized leader in the College’s Distance Learning Program. Her research has taken her to Nicaragua, Turkey and Qatar where she has studied social science problems within those countries through her work with Yale University’s Program in International Education Research. At the College, she established a Public Opinion Learning Laboratory, an applied social science research institute, which has led to many survey projects for the College and Westchester County.
Gene Grabiner – Professor Grabiner has been with Erie Community College for 28 years. His career has been one of service to students, to colleagues, to the College, and to the community. He has co-chaired the Middle States self-study team, and he cofounded the College’s Campus Councils. Additionally, he co-founded the College’s Honor’s program, developed a number of new courses, and, most recently, he has worked on ECC’s global initiatives in his role as project director of the ECC-GDCIC Study Abroad experience in Guangzhou, China. His concern for students is exemplary, as shown by the fact that he has received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, and is also a member of the Student Judiciary Review Board of ECC City Campus.

Arthur Kopelman – Professor Kopelman’s profound commitment to environmental science is demonstrated by his significant and sustained service to FIT, New York State and the surrounding region. His pioneering research and innovative environmental education models guide both guardians of coastal ecosystems and science educators. He was one of a small group of distinguished New York scientists to apply for a NOAA Fisheries Section 6 grant to advance the conservation and management of endangered species in our waters. He has been a senior scientist for Okeanos Ocean Research Foundation and co-founded Environmental Scientists for Global Survival. He also co-founded the Coastal Research and Educational Society of Long Island, serving as president since 2000. He has been pivotal in the establishment of the annual SUNY-wide Sustainable Business and Design Conference and is a member of the College's Sustainability Council. After many years leading seal, bird and whale watching expeditions, his current research will provide scientists, for the first time, a photo-identification catalogue and database of harbor and gray seals in New York waters.