At this year's commencement, Salutatorian Orubba Almansouri spoke passionately about her fight to break a tribal tradition and become the first female in her family to pursue a college education. Her story inspired many in attendance including First Lady Michelle Obama who has subsequently invited Orubba to speak at the White House. “I stand here today empowered by the opportunities that I got at CCNY,” she said before giving a special shout-out to our Chief of Cataloging Yoko Inagi-Ferguson, with whom Orubba has worked for the past five years.

“Orubba was one of our student assistants in the Cataloging department. I had the privilege to know her and work with her since she joined our team in 2011. Orubba was a hard-working, diligent student and a wonderful cataloger!” Prof. Inagi-Ferguson said.

“Being part of a big family, I needed this job to pitch in and do my part,” Orubba said. “By looking at my resume, you’ll see the types of skills I learned on the job include how to catalog and work with software programs like OCLC, WorldCat and Aleph. However, there’s so much more I learned that cannot be captured on a resume. For instance, my research skills improved drastically since becoming more comfortable with call numbers and familiarizing myself with the campus libraries. I also learned to balance work, life and school by incorporating work into my daily routine. But most importantly, it introduced me to the friends and mentors that have helped me along my journey at CCNY.”

“Over time, the library became like a second home to me. I grew comfortable in that space and even when I wasn’t on the clock, I would stay in the library to study, read, pray or just clear my head. Libraries are key components of students’ time in college and the ‘library family’ are the people who work tirelessly to make sure students can access the information they need. I was fortunate to be part of that family. I am grateful to Yoko Inagi-Ferguson, who has been like a mentor to me, Charles Stewart, who always made sure there was funding for my job, and for the Cohen family for making my time here memorable.”

After hearing Orubba’s moving commencement speech, Yoko Inagi-Ferguson said, “I cannot express how proud I am of her. I’m very happy that we could provide her with a work environment where she could feel at home and always come back to. Congratulations and good luck, Orubba!”
To Your Health!

Picking up on my theme last time of anticipation, I have been busy these past few months planning for many things, including helping develop our new virtual medical library. Working with Prof. Claudia Lascar, our Medical Librarian, and John Carrero, our IT Manager, I have spent many hours and meetings getting ready to launch approximately 20 new databases and 100 new e-journals for the new CUNY Medical School. Prof. Lascar has dealt with the overall supervision of the project, while focusing most currently on pricing and licenses with the dozen vendors, ushering paperwork thru procurement and CUNY legal, and most recently outlining a new home page and A-Z resource lists.

John Carrero with his tech assistant, Tony Mirabella, has been instrumental in establishing two new proxy servers for our new user groups—the Medical School staff and the clinical staff, working at St. Barnabas Hospital. This has entailed much coordination with IT and with Human Resources for CUNYFIRST integration. We look forward to rolling out these services in stages over the coming months.

Further efforts in the spirit of promoting good health are two initiatives that we are focusing on at our June Library Professional Development Day—yoga and contemplative pedagogy. I see this as an effort on the part of librarians to practice stress management in the midst of the myriad technical changes and challenges that now come with energetic information literacy efforts. We will see new products and programs such as OneSearch and Academic Works, both CUNY initiatives, and keep trying to strike a balance with our own local needs and practices.

There are of course many other exciting developments in the library this year, some of which are touched upon in this issue. For the future we also look forward to additional projects, such as working with the papers of the Secretary General of the United Nations, results of research in Japan, beginning the process of self-submission of e-theses by our students in Engineering, and accommodating two new active learning spaces on the first floor of Cohen. May our good anticipation continue.

In the words of one of the posters displayed by our Communications Assistant, Taiwo Oladele, “Keep calm and read on.”

Members of the Sophie Davis School’s Class of 2016 will be the first to enter CCNY’s new medical school
Krisia M. Ayala is a Puerto-Rican born, New-York-City based artist with an MFA in Digital and Interdisciplinary Arts Practice from The City College of New York. She is also CCNY Libraries’ first Artist-in-Residence, commissioned to design and create an art installation for the exhibit “Shared Emotions across Species,” to be hosted in the Cohen Library Archives in the Fall of 2017. The exhibit, which will feature the emotional life-cycle of forest animals, is meant to welcome visitors into animal habitats and encourage them to reflect upon our relationship with animals of all kinds.

One of the exhibit’s programmed events will be a humane education workshop for K-12 educators developed by Ayala and HEART (Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers) staffers to be offered at The City College of New York in the Summer of 2017. The workshop will use the introduction of the Shakespearean starling into the American landscape as a point of departure to connect bird migration to human migratory patterns and the social-emotional impact of being labeled “other.” This was the recent highlight of Ayala’s thesis panel discussion “Nonnative: Murmurs of Dissent” hosted in the Cohen Library Archives Gallery on May 5, 2016, which featured English Professor András Kiséry, Master Printer Dennis Hrehowsik, and Digital and Interdisciplinary Arts MFA student Burçin Aybe.

CCNY Libraries is delighted to be working with Ayala, who has won several fellowships and awards and who has been featured in several shows in galleries in New York City and in Rio Piedras and San Juan, Puerto Rico. Readers may find more of her beautiful artwork and projects by visiting her website (http://krisiamarila.com).
The Dominican Archives, a major subdivision of the CUNY Dominican Studies Institute, was established in 2002 as a repository of archival materials that document the contributions and experience of the Dominican population in the United States. The archival holdings consist of 70 collections totaling over 1,000 cubic feet of materials. Our major collections include, but are not limited to the following: Juan A. Paulino, Normandía Maldonado, Hope R. Stevens, Bienvenido Lara Flores, Zunilda Fondeur, Carolina Beaumont, Tito Enrique Cáñepa, Rafael Petiñón Guzmán, Luisa Ruiz, Anthony Stevens-Acevedo, Margarita Madera, Julia Santos Solomón, and Mercedes Gonzalez, among others.

We are currently conducting a survey funded by the New York State Documentary Heritage Program, which is expected to yield approximately 300 cubic feet of archival materials.

In order to compensate for the limited staff, The Dominican Archives makes extensive use of the CCNY Federal Work-Study Program as well as its volunteer, high school, undergraduate and graduate internship programs which are selected from The City College of New York Federal Work-Study Program as well as other colleges and universities, high schools and community volunteers. Our employees gain experience related to the archival profession as well as work experience applicable to other jobs and professions. Our graduate internship program recruits candidates from colleges and universities that provide graduate degrees in library and information services with a concentration in archival studies. Graduate interns may receive college credits for their internship at the Dominican Archives depending on their institutional college or university internship requirements.

We are currently in the process of conducting an internal evaluation of the archival program in order to prepare a strategic plan for future professionalization and to document the experience of Dominican populations outside of New York.
The Library Scene

Prof. William Gibbons and Mr. Todd Pickens enjoying our recently revamped Reference area

CCNY Libraries

Architecture
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@ccnyarchlibrary

Morris Raphael Cohen
NAC 2/310
(212) 650-7611
@ccnylibraries

Archives & Special Collections
NAC 5/301
(212) 650-7609

Music
Shepard 160
(212) 650-7174
@ccnymuslib

Center for Worker Education
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