Examining Evidence in “The House that Crack Built”

Hudson Valley alumni staff the State Police Forensic Center

President Joseph J. Bulmer Remembered

Chris Salamida’s Year as a ‘Cat

Hudson Valley standout pitches at “The Joe”
Chris Salamida's Year as a 'Cat

A former pitcher and outfielder for the Hudson Valley Vikings, Watervliet native Chris Salamida returned to Joseph L. Bruno Stadium this summer as a pitcher with the Tri-City ValleyCats, the single "A" affiliate of the Houston Astros.

The Astros assigned him to the team after selecting him in the 13th round of the 2006 Major League Baseball First Year Player Draft. Salamida had a banner year with the ValleyCats, leading the team – and the New York-Penn League – with 10 wins and a 1.06 earned run average. The team did well, too, capturing its second division title in three years.

Salamida talked with The Valley View about his year with the ValleyCats and his experience as a Viking in 2003, when he was 5-2 with a 4.01 ERA. He also hit .347 with three home runs and 26 runs batted in.

How did college baseball – both at Hudson Valley and SUNY Oneonta – prepare you for Class A ball?

It helped get me mentally prepared to pitch. When I was in high school, I let a lot of little things set me off. I learned how to become mentally composed in college.

What is your fondest Hudson Valley baseball memory?

I remember the playoffs (in 2003). We had some really good players, Jeremy Gulich and Rashad Barksdale.

Describe what it was like when you found out you were drafted – and that you would be returning to “The Joe” to play?

I think it definitely helped me by playing here this year. When I told my family and friends I was going to be here, they were really excited. I think playing here put me more at ease. The season has been better in front of family and friends.

What was your best ValleyCats experience?

It was either my first game or the first playoff game. I think the whole first base side was maroon (Watervliet's color) during my first start. The playoffs have been great, too.

What's next for you now that the season's over?

I plan on taking it easy and spend time with my family and friends, plan on relaxing for a couple of months and then get ready for spring training (with the Houston Astros) in Kissimmee, Fla.

– Steve Mullen

ON THE COVER:

Melissa France ’99 in the drug chemistry laboratories at the New York State Police Forensic Investigation Center. At right, Linda McKiernan ’94 demonstrates how a jacket is examined for DNA.
Examining Evidence in “The House that Crack Built”

Hudson Valley alums staff forensic center

Criminal Justice graduate Melissa France ’99 sometimes is hesitant to mention she’s a forensic scientist at the New York State Police Forensic Investigation Center.

It’s not that she isn’t proud of her work. She just dreads the same inevitable questions: “Everyone thinks it’s like ‘CSI,’” said France, referring to the popular television show. “We get that all the time.”

But as is often the case, what viewers see on television is quite different from what really happens at the center, located on the State Office Campus in Albany.

Sure, forensic scientists examine evidence with electron microscopes so powerful they can make a tick hair seem like the surface of the moon. Laboratories are indeed filled with centrifuges, test tubes, fume hoods and other equipment. And yes, state police forensic scientists testify in court about evidence and the procedures they use.

But they don’t track down leads like police detectives. There are no interrogation rooms with two-way mirrors where suspects are grilled until they confess. And the thousands of DNA tests they conduct each year can’t be completed within the hour.

Just mentioning those three letters – C-S-I – often causes eyes to roll. “We’re just one small piece of the investigation,” said Richard Brunt ’91, forensic scientist (at left).

Hudson Valley Community College’s connection to the center is strong, with graduates comprising 14 percent of the center’s 146-person lab workforce. And nearly one in four of the lab’s 130 forensic scientists either have graduated from, or taken courses at, the college.

While a Hudson Valley student, France was first intrigued, and then enthralled, by a class where students worked with footprints and hair samples and examined simulated crime scenes. Later, she studied at Russell Sage College, earning a bachelor’s degree in forensic science.

“I wish they made Hudson Valley a four-year school because I would have stayed there,” she said. “The professors took an interest in you and were concerned with how you were doing.”

France works in the center’s drug chemistry laboratories, where she uses chemical tests and microscopes to confirm that substances seized by police are in fact illegal drugs.

Occasionally, France’s job takes her to crime scenes. This summer, she was called late one night to Morris, a small rural town just north of Oneonta, where police discovered a self-storage rental unit turned into a methamphetamine lab.

Donning a respirator mask and a chemical-resistant suit in case of a spill, she helped collect chemistry equipment, unlabeled prescription bottles and eye-drop bottles that filled the unit.

“The police aren’t trained to deal with chemicals, so they call us,” France said. “Meth labs are becoming more common, particularly in the western part of the state.”

But such work outside the lab is rare.

A typical day for Michelle Maura ’94 and Linda McKiernan ’94, who work in the center’s DNA section, starts with checking out a single piece of evidence from lock-up and taking it to their respective labs. Each forensic scientist works alone so questions of tainted evidence or incorrect procedures don’t arise later.

Evidence is typically packaged in sealed paper bags and accompanied by a form that describes the evidence and the case.

“Cigarette butts, broken glass, a watermelon crate, a Suburban drive train, a 5-by-3 foot section of wall,” said McKiernan, rattling off evidence she’s worked on. “You never know what you’ll find.”

Maura and McKiernan were both in their mid-30s looking for a career change when they met as students in Hudson Valley’s former Medical Lab Technician program. They quickly bonded, helping each other with the challenging course work.

“We used each other’s brains,” joked Maura, adding, “the skills we learned at Hudson Valley really helped us here.”

There’s never a shortage of evidence for forensic scientists to examine. And the job’s gotten busier as police and prosecutors cope with the CSI effect: when a case comes to trial, jurors are specifically asking about forensic evidence.

“It’s a common question: ‘Is there DNA evidence and if there is, can we see it?’” Brunt said.

An Automotive Technical Services graduate, Brunt worked in the automotive industry for years before deciding to pursue a degree in human biology at the University at Albany.

But he still draws upon his automotive education. When a car is received as evidence, Brunt is called on for his ability to take them apart.

“I’ve cut seats down to the cushions looking for blood. Sometimes the seats will be washed to cover up the crime but the blood will be in the foam,” Brunt said. “Thankfully, we don’t have to put the cars back together.”

— Jason McCord
A native of South Troy and graduate of the La Salle Institute, Bulmer received his bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and his master's degree in nuclear engineering from the University of Michigan. He then returned to Rensselaer to earn his doctorate in nuclear engineering.

Prior to being named Hudson Valley president, Bulmer had distinguished a career in the private sector as an educator, working for 24 years at the Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory and serving as an adjunct faculty member at Union College and RPI for nearly two decades.

He was selected as the college’s third president because of his extensive academic background, coupled with his strong administrative and management skills. After he retired from Hudson Valley, President Bulmer has not stopped working: the State University of New York appointed him interim president at Sullivan, Clinton, Onondaga, and Fulton- Montgomery community colleges.

Those who wish may memorial contributions to the Community Hospice of Saratoga County, 2010 Middleton Rd., Ballston Spa, NY 12020, or the charity of their choice.

Visit www.hvcc.edu/about and click on "Post Presidents" to view photos from Bulmer’s tenure and to read a remembrance by Dr. Lucille Morin, executive director of the Capital District Educational Opportunity Center and vice president at the college, who worked with Bulmer for 13 years.
1970s
Vera Boerenko-Titterington ’72, a graduate of the Nursing program, is retired after spending 35 years as an operating room nurse at St. Clare’s Hospital. She lives in Port Charlotte, Fla., with her husband, Gerard Titterington. She recently was inducted into the Hudson Valley Community College Foundation’s Heritage Society, which recognizes and honors donors who have generously provided, or plan to provide, gifts to the Foundation through bequests, trusts, and other life income gifts.

Gayle E. Gaynor ’72, a graduate of the Nursing program, graduated in May from the University of Maine in Orono with her bachelor’s degree in nursing. Gayle’s daughter graduated at the same time, earning a bachelor’s degree in psychology. Gayle lives in Bar Harbor, Maine, with husband, Rob Gaynor ’73, a graduate of Hudson Valley’s Automotive Technical Services program. Gayle has worked in obstetrics since she graduated from Hudson Valley, and is currently employed at a small hospital in Bar Harbor. Gayle is also certified in inpatient obstetrics and is a certified childbirth educator.

St. Clare’s Hospital in Schenectady recently named Brian Forget ’74 as vice president of general services. Brian joined the hospital’s staff in 1970 while still in high school. He worked at St. Clare’s while attending Hudson Valley, where he received an associate’s degree in Electrical Construction and Maintenance. He also has a degree from Union College.

John M. Scarchilli ’74, president and chief executive officer of Pioneer Savings Bank in Troy, was sworn in as a new member of the board of directors of the Federal Home Loan Bank of New York. John is a lifelong resident of the Capital Region. He joined Pioneer Savings Bank in 1977 as an assistant auditor. John also is a graduate of Siena College, where he earned a degree in accounting. He is also a U.S. Army veteran, having served as a survey specialist from 1971 through 1973. He lives in Latham, with his wife, Nancy ’71.

Senator Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno has appointed Richard Bennett III ’75 to the board of directors of the Arsenal Business and Technology Partnership.

Joanne Hultenius Scargine ’75, a graduate of the Early Childhood program, is working as director of Head Start and Early Head Start for the Child Care Association of Brevard County Inc., in Cocoa, Fla. She and her husband, Robert, a Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute grad who owns an engineering business, have three children and live in Rockledge, Fla. After graduating from Hudson Valley, Joanne earned her bachelor’s degree from the SUNY College at Oneonta and her master’s degree from the University at Albany. Her association provides and coordinates comprehensive developmental child care and early childhood-related services for children and their families in Brevard County.

William Sheldris ’75, who earned an associate’s degree in Physical Education, went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in education from SUNY Cortland, a bachelor’s degree from Albany College of Pharmacy and a master’s degree in business administration from The College of Saint Rose. He currently works as president of PharmMerica in Tampa, Fla., which provides pharmacy products and services to the long-term care, assisted living, sub-acute, and skilled nursing industries. Bill is married to Diane McDonald Sheldris ’75, a Nursing graduate. Kerry and her husband, Jeff Lockhart ’00, a Criminal Justice graduate, recently welcomed the arrival of a baby girl.

Craig Pollock ’77, a Liberal Arts and Science graduate, transferred to Siena College, where he completed a bachelor’s degree in 1980. Today, Craig is a staff scientist in the Department of Space Science at Southwest Research Institute, a non-profit science and engineering facility and think tank.

Mark Gray ’76, who earned an associate’s degree in Business and Insurance, transferred to The College of Saint Rose, where he completed a bachelor’s degree in business administration. In 1987, Mark completed his MBA at the Florida Institute of Technology. He now works in Tampa, Fla., as a project manager for IBM. He also assists individuals with investment management services.

1980s
KeyBank promoted Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas ’80 to district leader for its Capital Region business banking division. In this new position, Karen leads sales for Key’s business banking team of nine relationship managers. Karen currently resides in Schenectady, where she serves as the treasurer of the Downtown Schenectady Business Improvement District. She also serves as the secretary for the Albany Executive Association, a networking group, and is on the board of Girl Scouts’ Mohawk Pathways Council. She also is the former president of the Schenectady East Rotary.

Colonel John Snyder ’81, a graduate of the Marketing program, was recently named chief public affairs officer for the U.S. Third Army. In this capacity, he oversees all Army Public Affairs activities in 27 countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan.

After 13 years with the New York Bankers Association (NYBA), Konstantinos “Gus” Kanakis ’84 was promoted to director of marketing and members services. In that role, he markets NYBA services to the banking industry throughout the state. Gus also received a promotion to general manager for the New York Bankers Service Corporation, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NYBA.

1990s
Individual Studies graduate Peter de Witt ’93 recently became the principal of Poestenkill Elementary School. Prior to taking his position at Poestenkill Elementary School, Peter taught elementary school in several city schools for 11 years. He also teaches graduate courses at The College of Saint Rose. Peter’s young adult novel, “Toaster Pond,” recently was published by DNA Press; the novel can be found in local bookstores.

After graduating with an Environmental Studies degree, Chad Mason ’98 transferred to the College of Environmental Science and Forestry on the Syracuse University campus. He received a bachelor’s degree, graduating magna cum laude, in environmental studies, in December 2000. Chad then earned his master’s degree in urban and regional planning at the University of Colorado in Denver. He lives in San Francisco and works for Pacific Municipal Consulting, a consulting firm based in Oakland, Calif.

Deaths
John Bernardin ’56
James Wing ’56
Roy Teal ’64
Dennis Bulson ’69
Mary Ann Phelan ’70
William Potts ’70
Timothy DeShaw ’71
Thomas A. Howe ’71
Philip C. Pratico, Sr. ’71
Ronald Resscott ’71
Anna Molinari Gareau ’73
Linda Face-Wiggins ’74
Mary Ann Amoyt Weed ’75
Karen Monshower ’76
Mark Jurcsak ’77
Kevin Delehanty ’80
Stephen M. McLoughlin ’80
George Szary ’80
Joseph R. Tiberia, Jr. ’80
John Kiernozek ’82
Paul J. Drescher ’86
Constance Hodder ’88
Joseph Stanga ’90
Edward Szesnat III ’91
Franklin House III ’93
Alec J. Boudreau ’99

Visit http://alumni.hvcc.edu for news, events and more.

First Dental Hygiene Class alumnae reunite in Florida
From left to right, members of the college’s first Dental Hygiene Class – the Class of 1962 – share a laugh at Englewood Beach, Fla.: Anita Bauman Rosenfield of Clearwater, Fla.; Gelsomina DeSorbe Hubbard of Middle Grove; Mary Lee Hagan Banfield of Ithaca; Sharon Nolan Flynn of Star Lake; and Linda “Beans” Hallam Long of Ithaca. In March 2006, the five women saw each other for the first time since they all attended their 40th class reunion, eight years before. All of the women are now retired from full-time dentistry. Gel writes, “Hudson Valley brought us together. Dental Hygiene kept us together. Now in retirement, we are still close and appreciative of the path each has taken. Whether on the beach or at the condos, we felt like we did when we all lived together at the YWCA in Troy. It was great to see the husbands meet for the first time and enjoy the camaraderie of the group.”
The path to medical school can now start at Hudson Valley because of the creation of a new associate's degree in Biological Sciences. This new degree program is designed for students who plan to transfer for continued study at the bachelor's, master's and post-graduate degree level.

To earn the degree, students must complete four semesters of study in biology, chemistry, calculus and physics, as well as several electives. The college currently has a transfer agreement with a number of colleges for their pre-med and clinical biology bachelor's degree program.

"This is an academically rigorous program that meets the needs of those students who hope to pursue a career as a professional in medical science, dentistry, veterinary science, pharmacy or other areas, like research, in the biological sciences," Biology, Chemistry and Physics Department Chairperson Dr. Peter Schaefer said.

In that role, Popovics leads efforts to develop a comprehensive enrollment management plan, and oversees all of the college's student services, including admissions, registration, intercollegiate athletics and disabled student services.

The position replaced the college's vice president for student services post, and was created in response to the need for the college to take a comprehensive approach to enrollment, which drives all aspects of the college's operations, including budgeting, academic program development and strategic planning.

Prior to joining Hudson Valley, Popovics most recently served as vice president for enrollment management and institutional planning, is the college's new vice president for enrollment management and student development.

Hudson Valley Honors Community Partners, Distinguished Alumni

U.W. Marx Construction Company, Senator Bruno, three alumni receive awards

U. W. Marx Construction Company – the largest construction company in Rensselaer County – is the 2005 recipient of the college’s Corporate Excellence Award in recognition of the company’s commitment to Hudson Valley, its alumni and the Capital Region.

The award was one of five presented in October at the college’s Distinguished Service Award Luncheon, sponsored by the Hudson Valley Community College Foundation and the Alumni Association.

Founded in 1949 by Ulrich Marx, U.W. Marx grew from a small, one-man business to the largest construction company in Rensselaer County. Now led by President Peter B. Marx – Ulrich’s son – the full-service construction company provides general contracting, construction management and design-build services.

The company has sponsored the Foundation’s annual golf classic since 1994, and has supported the college’s Disability Resource Center and Construction Technology program.

To recognize the company’s support of the Construction Technology program, the college has named its Construction Lab in Hudson Hall (Room Number 144) as the “U.W. Marx Construction Company Laboratory.”

U.W. Marx has worked on a variety of projects on campus, including the construction of the Fitzgibbons Health Technologies Center and the Joseph L. Bruno Stadium. It also provided construction management services for the renovation of the Guenther Enrollment Services Center and served as the architect’s on-site representative for the redesign of the Raymond H. Sieck Campus Center.

The four other honorees are:

Mark T. Breslin ’58 received the Otto V. Guenther Career Achievement Award. Breslin started his career as a draftsman after graduating in 1958. He had a 23-year career with the General Electric Co., and in 1983, Breslin became vice president, partner and part owner of Mechanical Dynamics & Analysis. In 2002, where he worked for 12 years before starting his own engineering company, Maranda Technical. In addition to his associate’s degree in Mechanical Technology, Breslin also holds a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from Union College.

State Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno received the 1993 Award for Distinguished Service to Hudson Valley Community College by a Non-Alumnus. Bruno has been a staunch advocate for higher education and was key in helping to create the College Savings Program in 1997 to help families save for their children's education. Bruno also supported the creation of the College Bound program, which made New York one of the first states in the nation to allow for the deduction of tuition expenses from state taxes. During the last six years, he has advocated for more than $17 million to support the improvement of services and facilities at Hudson Valley.

Anthony Kossmann of Altamont, a retired manager with the former Niagara Mohawk Power Corp., has been one of Hudson Valley’s most visible alumni. He has lent his face and voice to advertisements that promote the college, and has worked in partnership with the Hudson Valley Community College Foundation to attract additional financial resources to the Foundation. He currently serves as vice chairman of the Foundation’s Board of Directors, and in February 2007, he will assume the post of chairman.

Gordon N. Zuckerman ’62 received the Hudson Valley Community College Humanitarian Service Award. President of Murray and Zuckerman Inc., a nationally recognized life, health, group and disability insurance brokerage firm, Zuckerman serves on the boards of many charitable, civic and professional organizations.

He currently serves as fire commissioner and secretary of Niskayuna Fire District 2; a mentor at Pleasant Valley and Woodford elementary schools in Schenectady; and treasurer of the Schenectady City School District Educational Foundation. In addition to his associate’s degree in Chemistry, he has a bachelor’s degree in chemistry and mathematics from Union College.

Online giving made easy

The Foundation now provides donors with a safe, secure way to make their 2006-07 Annual Fund gift online by using their Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express credit card.

The Annual Fund provides scholarships, classroom equipment, technology upgrades, curriculum development, funding for new academic initiatives, campus beautification projects, and much more. Donations to the 2005-06 Annual Fund totaled more than $20,000.

Visit www.hvcc.edu/foundation and click on “Ways to Give” for more information or to make your gift today.

You also can support the Foundation by shopping online through igive.com. With igive.com, you can make purchases at more than 600 online stores (such as Office Depot, Expedia.com, Gap, Barnes & Noble, L.L.Bean, Best Buy, Dell, Hallmark, Staples) and a portion of your transaction will be donated to the Foundation.

Each time you shop at Gigive.com, up to 26 percent (and sometimes more) of each purchase gets donated. Visit www.gigive.com and join today.

Give the gift of learning this holiday season

Do you have a family member or friend who loves to learn? Fuel their passion with a Hudson Valley Community College learning certificate.

Learning certificates are available in any denomination, have no expiration date and can be used for either credit or credit-free courses. For more information or to purchase a learning certificate, contact the Cashier’s Office at (518) 629-5954.
The path to medical school can now start at Hudson Valley because of the creation of a new associate degree in Biological Sciences. This new degree program is designed for students who plan to transfer for continued study at the bachelor’s, master’s and post-graduate degree level.

The new degree program offers core science courses in biology, chemistry, physics, and a technical writing component. It is designed for students who have completed high school and are interested in pursuing careers in healthcare or related fields.

To be eligible for the program, students must have a minimum of 160 high school credits and a grade point average of at least 3.0. They must also complete the required courses, which include biology, chemistry, and physics, as well as a course in technical writing.

The program is designed to be completed in two years and includes courses such as anatomy and physiology, biology of disease, chemistry of biology, and physics of biology. In addition, students will have the opportunity to complete an internship or research project in a healthcare-related field.

The new degree program is part of the college’s efforts to expand its offerings and meet the needs of students who are interested in pursuing careers in healthcare. It is designed to be flexible and accommodate the schedules of part-time students.

Students interested in the new degree program can apply online through the college’s website. For more information, visit www.hvcc.edu/biologicalsciences or contact the Office of Admissions at (518) 757-0725.
Public Skating
Through Sunday, March 11, 2007
Robert M. Conway Ice Rink
Noon – 2 p.m. Monday through Friday
4 p.m. – 6:15 p.m. Saturday and Sunday
Admission is $2 for children (ages 2–17) and senior citizens (age 60 and up)
and $3 for adults (age 18 and up).
For more information, visit
www.hvcc.edu/facilities/schedule

Artist Robin Arnold
Exhibition through Saturday, Jan. 20
Teaching Gallery in the Marvin Library
An accomplished artist and professor at SUNY New Paltz, Robin Arnold shows works from her painting and drawing collections.

America’s Place:
The Self-Censoring of American Writers
11 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 7
Bulmer Telecommunications Center Auditorium
Author David Vigoda explores the issue of writer self-censorship, asking why American writers don’t write about America and its place in the world. Vigoda holds fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York Foundation for the Arts and directs a writing workshop in New Hampshire.

Athletic Hall of Fame Nominations
5 p.m. Friday, Dec. 8
(Deadline for submissions)
The Athletic Hall of Fame was established in 1979 to recognize Hudson Valley athletes, coaches, teams and contributors. There are currently 51 members of the Hall of Fame; this year’s inductees will be recognized at a banquet scheduled for Thursday, April 19, 2007.

Elizabeth Woodbury Kasius & Heard
Noon, Thursday, Jan. 18
Maureen Stapleton Theatre
Pianist and composer Elizabeth Woodbury Kasius and her ensemble play classical, jazz and other music from around the world.

Eric and Mary Ross:
Multi-Media Theremin Concert
Noon, Thursday, Jan. 25
Maureen Stapleton Theatre
Musician Eric Ross and his wife, artist Mary Ross, join together and present an audio-visual exploration of the Theremin, an electronic musical instrument.

Hudson Valley Class of 2008 member Halea Dickinson receives a congratulatory handshake from Dr. Alexander Popovics, the college’s vice president for enrollment management and student development, after winning a $1,000 scholarship at Orientation 2006. More than 1,900 new students, their parents and other family members attended orientation, which featured a series of workshops designed to orient new students to the campus and give them, and their family members, strategies for academic and collegiate success. The Fall 2006 semester began Monday, Aug. 28.

Remembering a man with a big heart, at the heart of campus
Clock tower to be named in memory of Dr. Frank Morgan
A clock tower being planned for the center of the Hudson Valley campus will be named in memory of Dr. Frank J. Morgan Jr., one of the college’s most distinguished and beloved professors and administrators.

Located in the newly-formed quad between the Guenther Enrollment Services Center, the Bulmer Telecommunications Center and the new Administration Building, the clock will serve as a focal point on campus, as well as the college’s central time piece.

The Keepers of the Flame, an association of the college’s retired faculty, administration and staff members; Dr. Morgan’s widow, Anne; and the Foundation are leading fund-raising efforts toward the clock’s purchase and placement.

To honor Dr. Morgan’s memory by making a gift toward this project, visit www.hvcc.edu/foundation and click on “Dr. Frank J. Morgan Clock Tower” or call the Foundation for more information: (518) 629-8022.