

candidates for government service. Kelly began her career in the 1990s with Women's Statewide Legislative Network and has worked as a diversity consultant for Fortune 500 companies, government agencies and nonprofits.

**Paul Melander** has been added to the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) board of directors in Pittsburgh, Pa. CASA's mission is to ensure that every child has a safe, supportive and permanent home by providing volunteer advocacy.



Paul Melander

**92 Gregory Hitchcock** has been working on his blog, *The Press Matters*. He uses this Web site (<http://thepressmatters.blogspot.com>) to discuss his views on journalism, mental illness and seeking the truth from a reporter's perspective. **Sean Rickert** was appointed superintendent of schools for the Pima, Ariz., school district. Previously, he taught for seven years in rural Arizona and was the director of an alternative high school in St. Johns, Ariz., for three years. **Nyam Smith** has been named associate vice president of Family Services at St. Paul-based Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, the largest nonprofit human service organization statewide. In his new role, Nyam is responsible for developing key community relationships to create innovative and high-quality services to assure that Minnesota's children, youth and families will have safe, stable homes, as well as the opportunity to thrive in the community.

**93 John Bagyi** is included in the *Best Lawyers in America* 2013 for Employment Law – Management and

the 2012 *New York Super Lawyers* Upstate Edition listing for Employment and Labor. John, a certified senior professional in human resources, counsels and represents employers of all types and sizes in a variety of labor and employment contexts. He also has served on the executive committee of Albany Law School's National Alumni Association and co-chaired the Albany-Colonie Chamber of Commerce's Capital Leadership program. John has been listed in the *New York Super Lawyers* since 2009 and in the *Best Lawyers in America* since 2007.

**94 Samantha Shanahan McGrath** joined Wouch, Maloney & Co. LLP, Certified Public Accountants, as an accounting and audit manager last August. She is responsible for planning and executing audit, review and compilation engagements for firm clients. Previously, she worked at a national accounting firm in Philadelphia. Samantha is a licensed C.P.A. in the State of New York and in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. **Sonia Nunez** recently was hired by Columbus Elementary in New Rochelle, N.Y., as its principal. Sonia has been assistant principal at Columbus since September 2005. Prior to that time, she held several positions, including foreign language teacher and 21st-century after-school program coordinator, at Isaac E. Young Middle School, New Rochelle, N.Y.



Samantha McGrath

**Heidi Weber** has joined Berkshire Community College in Massachusetts as public relations manager. She will be responsible for developing and distributing promotional and public relations materials, such as news

## Rashaun Allen, B.S.'09 In the Moment

As an assistant manager at Hannaford near his Wappingers Falls, N.Y., home, Rashaun Allen oversees daily operations for various departments; assists customers and vendors; plans training for associates; and helps direct the store's community-service efforts. On his own time, however, Allen is a poet who launched RashaunEnterprises LLC, now operating as RoyalBluePublishing.com.



"My poetry is my heart on display," says the Brooklyn, N.Y., native. While "a handful of the poems" in his self-published *A Walk Through Brooklyn* and *In The Moment* "are personal," and some "mention current events, politics and religion," the others "are snapshots of a collective experience we all share. My goal is to keep my poetry timeless and relatable," explains Allen, whose themes include love, social issues and overcoming hardship.

"Everyone has a moment in life that decides his or her future. That moment, for me, happened at a poetry showcase. I really wanted to win. I didn't, but I made a personal commitment not to let adversity get the best of me. I decided to write a book, which became *A Walk Through Brooklyn*. My favorite poem in it is 'If I Could'; it is dedicated to my mother. Another of my favorites, from *In The Moment*, is 'A Hero,' written for my grandfather."

Both *In The Moment* and *A Walk Through Brooklyn* are available as e-books. Through RoyalBluePublishing.com, "I am looking for writers to publish in non-fiction and fiction genres. I don't rest on my laurels," notes Allen, adding that he plans to write "a memoir or a self-help book."

Allen, who always "loved to write," majored in business administration and English at UAlbany, "a place conducive to growth. I was offered a generous financial aid package; pre-enrolled in the School of Business; and selected as an EOP student, which meant I would have a lot of support."

EOP, he adds, was "my road map" at the University. "The administrative staff – Dr. [Carson] Carr, Maritza Martinez, Tyshena Hunter and Chris Fernando – was my compass. Dr. Carr emphasized the importance of lifting other people up as you climb. Maritza's dedication impresses everyone. Chris would lend his ear to me whenever I was contemplating a life decision. I never considered having a mentor until a conversation with Tyshena. I had study groups and went to social events with my EOP peers. EOP was my extended family."

To learn more about *A Walk Through Brooklyn* and *In The Moment*, visit [www.RoyalBluePublishing.com](http://www.RoyalBluePublishing.com). For writing inquiries, email Allen at [Rashaunenterprises@gmail.com](mailto:Rashaunenterprises@gmail.com).

**Like us on Facebook and help fund a scholarship**

Thanks to the *Elva N. Hudtwalker Scholarship*, **Tia Marks** will get, "another year in school and another step closer" to her educational and career goals. Tia plans to attend medical school and then work for Doctors Without Borders in an effort to help heal those in need around the world.

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