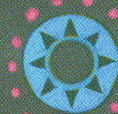


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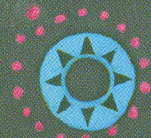
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Brooklyn



and  
beyond...

Developing Software in Uganda  
Bringing Medical Care to Latin America  
Advocating for Children's Rights in Geneva



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Volume 2 | Number 1 | Fall 2012



## PROFESSOR GERTRUD LENZER Testifies Before U.N. Committee

Based on decades of leadership and persistent advocacy for children's rights, Gertrud Lenzer, professor of sociology and founding director of the Children's Studies Center for Research, Policy, and Public Service, was invited by the United Nations in May to participate in a working group on children's rights in Geneva.

"It is certainly an honor for the Children's Studies Center," Lenzer says. "It is wonderful for Brooklyn College to be involved in these important treaty obligations."

Lenzer represented the Children's Studies Center, one of only three nongovernmental organizations to be invited to appear before the eighteen members of the U.N. Committee on the Rights of the Child. The committee will articulate a list of issues that will be forwarded to the United States government for consideration in advance of the committee's January 2013 meeting. At that time, the Periodic Report of the United States of America will be addressed in an official session in Geneva.

After receiving a \$50,000 grant from the Oak Foundation, the Children's Studies Center conducted research to determine whether New York State was in compliance with a treaty dealing with the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. Their report does not offer recommendations but notes where there may be loopholes in state law.

Lenzer presented findings from the center's research to the U.N. committee in Geneva last month.

The complete report, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, is available at [www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/optionalprotocol](http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/optionalprotocol). —J.S.



## FOREIGN EXCHANGE: Finnish and American Scholars Research the Keys to Academic Success

**F**inland's educational system has long been touted as a highly successful model.

Among fifty-seven countries evaluated in 2009 by the Programme for International Student Assessment, which measures student success around the world, Finland ranked second in science, third in reading, and sixth in math.

While Fulbright winner Sophie Knowles '09, M.A. '12, has

traveled to Finland to research its educational system, Finnish visiting professor Susanna Hannus has come to Brooklyn College to better understand the socioeconomic factors stressing the educational system in her native country.

A nation of six million people, Finland transformed its educational system in the early 1990s by decentralizing control from the National Board of Education to each

municipality. Hannus, who lectures on methodology in the early childhood education department, points out that each of the nation's 336 municipalities has a board of governance and is free to decide the curricula for their schools, including the textbooks they use and how they evaluate their students.

"There is not talk about grades until what we call upper secondary school, the

equivalent of your junior and senior years in high school, or the lyceum in other European societies," says Hannus, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Helsinki, whose dissertation focuses on political power and education in schools located in different socioeconomic areas. Instead, "there is a culture of trust that I'm sure is more difficult to achieve in larger societies."