Xia Feng

For more than two decades, Xia Feng has inspired children and their caregivers to embrace the joy of reading and learning through programs and services she helped create at the New Haven Free Public Library (NHFPL). A recent immigrant when she began her employment there in 1994, Xia Feng recognized the value of free public library services to the local Chinese community and reached out to them immediately, including going door to door to share library news with Yale’s Chinese families, graduate students and their children. She quickly joined forces with the Yale-China Association and Association of Chinese Students & Scholars to introduce its members to the library. Early on she organized Chinese Lunar New Year Festivals, attracting a hundred or more participants from both the New Haven and Yale communities.

On her own initiative, Xia began to work in 2015 with visiting teachers from China in Yale’s Summer English Language Institute. They partnered to host a three-week program at Ives Library on modern Chinese culture. This past summer, she deepened the collaboration with the Institute to provide visiting teachers to teach English to Chinese grandparents of Yale students (recruited by Xia). The grandparents were offered basic English classes while their grandchildren were entertained through story times organized by Xia. The experience was the gem in Yale’s program and it was noted that Xia’s unhesitating welcome to its participants each year made the program and the New Haven community much stronger.

Xia’s interactions with Yale are not confined to a single partnership. Most recently, when the Yale Rep expressed interest in launching a free theatre pass program to New Haven resident library card holders, Xia Feng made it happen.

For her tireless work connecting cultures, neighborhoods and generations through the New Haven Free Public Library, Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker-Myers and President Peter Salovey present Xia Feng with an Elm Award.

Judy Puglisi

This spring, Judy Puglisi will be retiring as principal of Metropolitan Business Academy, a local New Haven magnet high school. Over the years, Judy has been an experienced and trusted
advisor to her teachers and students, as well as to the many Yale faculty and undergrads with whom she collaborated.

Blurring the boundaries between school and community, Judy Puglisi recognized that learning happens everywhere for her students. She also believed that leadership is most effective when it’s distributed among a team of individuals with different skill sets and experiences. It is not surprising that she and her teachers created an upbeat, welcoming, solution-oriented, professional environment at Metro.

Thanks to her community-embracing approach, Metropolitan Business Academy has been a second home to countless Yale students. In her years as principal, Judy partnered with Yale University to help support Metro’s teachers and extend and enrich the learning opportunities for its students. Judy regularly invited Yale’s Community Health Educator undergraduate students to visit the school to provide near-peer health education workshops to Metro students. The Yale Urban Debate League partnered with Metro to coach its debate team. And Judy worked closely with Yale’s Education Studies Scholars program to create collaboratively designed research projects.

Not only has Judy opened the door for Yale organizations to work within the halls of Metro, Judy regularly encourages Metro students to take advantage of the numerous programs and workshops Yale provides to the community. Metro students are regularly seen on Yale’s campus participating in year-round programming, including Yale Pathways to Science workshops and demonstrations, and Yale Pathways to Arts and Humanities talks and panels led by Yale faculty and students.

While Judy has served as a role model for countless Metro students, she has also been instrumental in shaping the lives of Yale students. The past three Yale Public School Interns who volunteered at Metro to connect the school to university resources have all gone into teaching and school administration after graduating from Yale, no doubt a result of the great counsel and guidance Judy provided during their time at her school.

For regularly convening, encouraging, and inspiring members of the Yale and New Haven Public School communities, Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker-Myers and President Peter Salovey present Judith Puglisi with an Elm Award.
The Music In Schools Initiative was created in the late 1990s when members of the Yale Class of 1957 came together and began a project focused on music education in primary and secondary schools. Based on the values of dignity and inclusion, at its core is the belief that every student should have access to a robust and active music life.

The Initiative has a multi-pronged approach to reaching hundreds of New Haven Public School students both in and out of school time. During the school year, over 60 Yale School of Music teaching artists, in collaboration with New Haven Public School music teachers, lead group lessons for over 400 youth, work one-on-one with individual students, and assist with activities like music theory and ear training. After school, over 200 New Haven students participate in the All-City Honors Ensembles. This program, led by Yale School of Music teaching artists and New Haven music educators, provides opportunities for students to participate in eight different choir, orchestra, and band ensembles which provide public performances at Yale School of Music and New Haven Public School venues.

The Morse Summer Music Academy, an intensive four-week program, convenes over 100 local students at Yale for five hours of daily classes, rehearsals, and lessons. One of the hallmarks of the Academy is its numerous performance opportunities: during the four weeks, Morse students participate in over thirty concerts across Yale’s campus and in the New Haven community.

New Haven Public School students and teachers are, and have always been, at the heart of all programming for the Initiative, with mentoring and active music-making permeating every aspect of the shared experiences. The Music in Schools Initiative team understands that these tenets will lead to the outcomes they envision – a sense of personal worth and dignity, respect and tolerance of different points of view, and inspirational and aspirational feelings and goals.

The talent, enthusiasm, hope, and joy seen in participating youth and their families have united the many diverse populations of New Haven. In the closing concert of the Morse Academy this
summer, Yale University’s Sprague Hall was nearly filled to capacity with proud parents and friends all cheering children playing beautiful music on an international stage.

For sharing the passion and joy of music, President Peter Salovey and Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker-Myers present an Ivy Award to Dean Michael Yaffe, Rubén Rodríguez-Ferreira, and Rachel Glodo who are accepting on behalf of the Music in Schools Initiative.

David Skelly

When David Skelly got the offer to become the Director of the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History four years ago, he was sitting next to his son, who was about 8 at the time. David’s son looked at him and said “I would totally do that!” A Peabody kid himself since visiting the Peabody Museum’s Great Hall as a toddler, David agreed and happily accepted. It is no surprise then that, as Director of Yale’s Peabody Museum, David Skelly has placed a particular emphasis on continuing to find new ways for members of the community to experience the same joys of the Peabody and its collections.

While everyone knows about the demise of the dinosaurs, under David’s leadership, hands-on programming and public outreach has increased dramatically and has no fear of extinction. The number of both graduate and undergraduate docents continues to rise. As part of the Peabody Museum’s 150th anniversary celebration in 2016, David created a free, behind-the-scenes collection tour led by trained Yale undergraduates. These tours, which continue today, quickly fill up as they demystify the collections and offer a glimpse of some of the 13 million hidden treasures that rarely see the light of day. Another brainchild of David’s is the gallery talks, which invite the public into the museum for discussions led by Yale scientists, anthropologists and scholars who highlight their own work and research.

David is always open to new ideas that will facilitate community access to the museum’s collections. When David was presented with the opportunity, he jumped at the chance to create a Peabody Museum installation on Broadway, providing free community access to the new space and highlighting the tremendous community resource just up the street on Whitney Avenue.

Under David’s leadership, existing programs also continue to flourish. The EVOLUTIONS afterschool program, which is free to participants and began with just eleven students, is now a
multi-year science and college-focused afterschool program that engages 120 local public school students across all four years of high school in classes led by Yale undergraduates. After one year in the program, students can apply to work as Science Interpreters in the Museum through SciCORPS, the Science Career Orientation and Readiness Program for Students. Many students also intern each summer through the EVOLUTIONS Lab Internship Program, working side by side with faculty, staff, and students in Yale laboratories. Community celebrations hosted at and by the Peabody Museum continue to be tremendously popular and well-attended by members of the New Haven and Yale communities alike. These include Summer’s Last Roar, Fiesta Latina, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Legacy of Environmental and Social Justice, Dinosaur Days, Earth Day and A Night at the Peabody Museum, just to name a few. Best of all for David Skelly, each year he gets to see his youthful reflection in the awed faces of the 4,000 New Haven Public School children as he welcomes them to the Great Hall at the Peabody as part of school trips to the museum.

For his passion for connecting a treasured resource with New Haven residents and his tireless commitment to encouraging interaction, outreach, and collaboration at the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, President Peter Salovey and Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker-Myers present David Skelly with an Ivy Award.

**Alex Dorato**

In his 26th year as Yale’s Men’s Tennis Coach, Alex Dorato isn’t only the winningest tennis coach in the university’s history, he is also a shining star in the community as he brings the concept of TEaM, – Tennis, Education and Mentoring – to New Haven youth. In tennis, love reflects the score of zero, but Alex Dorato has taken his love of tennis and translated it into advantages, for New Haven youth, and the return has been strong and life-changing.

As President of the Board of Directors for New HYTEs (which stands for New Haven Youth Tennis and Education), Coach Dorato has raised awareness within the Yale and New Haven communities on the value of providing tennis, education, and mentoring as a pathway to wellness and higher education. His natural ability to create and strengthen relationships between the New Haven Public Schools, the New Haven Parks Department, and the university to secure equipment and access to tennis courts and tutoring space provides New Haven youth the opportunity to play the game of tennis while preparing for the future both on and off the
Coach Dorato has overseen the growth of New HYTEs, from serving 10 kids in 2008 to nearly 500 today. Early on, Coach Dorato, with the support of Yale’s tennis staff and the men’s tennis team, created flagship programming designed to provide life skills mentoring, academic tutoring and tennis development to New Haven Public School students. Throughout the school year, students participate in afterschool programming at the Cullman-Heyman Tennis Center at Yale. Sessions begin with a healthy snack, followed by an hour of tennis instruction and an hour of mentoring and academic tutoring provided by a group of volunteers that includes members of the Yale tennis team. During the summer, local youth participate in the Summer Academy where they continue to receive tennis instruction and engage in life skills and academic support activities. The ultimate goal is to help guide students on a path to college and for New HYTEs and its mentors to support them throughout college to graduation.

Alex Dorato is an exemplary mentor to his Yale tennis team, New HYTEs youth participants, their parents, and the New HYTEs staff who work beside him each day. For serving up aces with his vision and selfless dedication to positively changing lives of New Haven youth through the sport of tennis, President Peter Salovey and Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker-Myers present Alex Dorato with an Ivy Award.

Undergraduate Ivy

Code Haven

Annie Chen

Dennis Duan

In today’s world, employers across many fields are increasingly looking for a more tech-savvy workforce. Recognizing this need, and wanting to share their passion for coding, Code Haven was formed by Yale undergraduate students to increase interest and awareness of computer science in local New Haven middle schools.

Code Haven’s inaugural semester in the fall of 2016 was launched in one sixth-grade classroom at Fair Haven School, with 18 students and 16 Yale mentors. By the beginning of 2017, Code Haven had grown into a student organization with over 25 members,
serving nearly 200 students in New Haven and implementing a computer science curriculum in 7 middle-school classrooms. Every week, Yale students teach computing lessons at several schools in New Haven, engaging the students with online lessons, group activities, and class-wide demonstrations. Code Haven’s volunteers have guided students to create over 18,000 lines of code and, along the way, have shown them that computer science is a viable field of study that they can pursue in college and beyond.

In response to numerous requests from local educators, Code Haven held a TeachTech conference on a Saturday this past December to help K-8 teachers implement computer science lessons in their classrooms. 55 teachers with no background in coding or computer science came to Yale’s campus to learn the foundations of programming and engage in hands-on coding workshops. By the end of the day, teachers had the tools needed to encourage more of their students to pursue computer science.

For inspiring and supporting future coders and computer science professionals, President Peter Salovey and Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker-Myers present an Undergraduate Ivy Award to Annie Chen and Dennis Duan on behalf of Code Haven.

Graduate Ivy

Robert Rock

Tehreem Rehman

Kayla Ringelheim

The Yale United States Health Justice Course & Collaborative

Curricular change comes in a variety of ways in institutions of higher learning. The story of the curricular change that brought about the creation of the Yale United States Health Course and Collaborative, however, is a true story of partnership between members of the Yale and New Haven communities.

Recognizing the need to educate health professional students about health disparities and inequalities, Yale health students engaged leaders from across New Haven as well as Yale faculty to design the Yale United States Health Justice Course, which taught fellow students about health inequalities and how they, as future providers, could address such issues. In its pilot year, the
USHJ Course provided a semester-long series of seminars and community outings facilitated by New Haven community leaders and Yale University faculty.

The course was so well-received that all involved wanted to continue the discussion and work beyond the seminar sessions. This led to the creation of the USHJ Collaborative in the fall of 2015. The collaborative, a network of students, medical residents, and New Haven community members, hosts events throughout the year designed to help participants understand and contribute to health equity efforts throughout the city.

The collaborative also facilitates the development of strong bonds between students, New Haven residents and local organizations. For example, Yale health students have begun regularly working at the Little Red Hen Community Garden in West River to help increase access to healthy food and joined the Yale Primary Care Internal Medicine’s community-walking program which promotes walking as a healthy activity and encourages casual conversations between community members and physicians.

For creating a ripple effect of advocacy and positive curricular reform, President Peter Salovey and Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker-Myers will present the Graduate Ivy Award to Robert Rock, Tehreem Rehman, and Kayla Ringelheim on behalf of the Yale United States Health Justice Course and Collaborative.

Cesar Pelli

An internationally recognized architect, Cesar Pelli’s influence reaches from Kuala Lumpur to Osaka to London. A native of Argentina, New Haven has been fortunate to have been his chosen home for the last 40 years and his influence on this city is noticeable in his local projects which include among others Century Tower, Boyer Center, Coop High School, the Lanman Center, and the Malone Center. Pelli designs buildings that fit with their natural surroundings and respect both the client’s and community’s wishes. With the belief that buildings should be responsible citizens and that the aesthetic qualities of a building should grow from the specific characteristic of each project such as its location and purpose, Cesar Pelli effortlessly blends both town and gown into his New Haven designs.

Arriving in New Haven in 1977, Cesar Pelli served as the Dean of Yale’s School of Architecture, and soon opened his architectural firm in New Haven, where it still is today. As Dean, a position
he held until 1984, he nurtured the talents of a new generation of architects, many of whom stayed in New Haven with their work continuing to benefit the Elm City.

In addition to contributing to the growth of professional architects in New Haven, Cesar Pelli is a relentless mentor and teacher, always willing to offer insightful advice on local projects. He is generous with his creativity and with his accessibility, all to the benefit of New Haven.

Winston Churchill famously observed that “we shape our buildings and thereafter they shape us.” We, in New Haven, have been blessed over the last 40 years to be shaped by Cesar Pelli with New Haven buildings that not only enhance and respect their urban setting but inspire its occupants and visitors alike. For leaving a lasting and heart-felt mark on our city’s architecture and sense of community, President Peter Salovey and Board of Alders President Tyisha Walker present Cesar Pelli in absentia with a Special Elm and Ivy Award.