



# Staten Island Advance

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## Staten Island's Wagner College looks like a million — despite unflattering headline

By TRACEY PORPORA



Newsweek's Sept. 17 cover — which portrays two people walking arm in arm along Sutter Oval toward Wagner College's Main Hall — is certainly generating buzz.

While the Grymes Hill college looks beautiful in the photo, the accompanying headline — “Is College a Lousy Investment?” — is considerably less flattering.

The Newsweek story is about the high cost of a college education compared to the limited job pool for graduating students. The story, written by Megan McArdle, reads, “[College] is sending parents to the poorhouse and saddling students with a backpack full of debt that doesn't even guarantee a good job in the end.” It claims that the price of a sheepskin has nearly doubled since 1995.

While there is no reference to Wagner College in the story, the “stock photo” chosen by the magazine has been the subject of comments on Facebook and Twitter pages. Several current and former students posted about the cover photo and headline.

“Irony doesn't seem strong enough a word,” wrote one alumnus on Facebook. Another Facebook post reads: “Awww look. My alma mater is the cover photo for the article questioning the financial validity of college. So glad to see Wagner recognized, so  $\hat{\square}$ amused that it's in this format.

However, school officials — who didn't know about the story before it was published — say the cover photo is great exposure for the college, regardless of the headline and story content.

“It looks like the shot was taken several years ago and wasn't anything they scheduled specifically with us,” said Lee Manchester, Wagner's director of media relations. “There are

many photos of Main Hall and Wagner College out there with photo agencies. So I'm not surprised they used that photo."

"We see pictures of Wagner College in all sorts of settings," he added, noting that the college's photo has appeared on the dust jacket of a recent novel, "The Starboard Sea," by Amber Dermont, as well as in commercials, on television shows and in movies, including the 2003 film "School of Rock."

"It's one more appearance of the college in one of the many settings that it has appeared before. There was no buzz on campus other than news of the photo being on the cover. We see our picture so often," said Manchester.

Dr. Richard Guarasci, president of Wagner College, was unavailable for comment.

While Newsweek spokesman Andrew Kirk confirmed the Wagner College cover was a "stock photo," he could not provide an explanation as to why it was chosen. However, it's not surprising that the photo was selected: Newsweek and Wagner College have had a long relationship. In fact, Newsweek editor Jon Meacham was the commencement speaker at Wagner College's graduation last year.

In addition, Wagner College has been listed on Newsweek's top college lists.

Wagner College was also recently identified in U.S. News & World Report's "Best Colleges 2013" as the only college or university in New York State with three or more "programs to look for," and one of only three such schools in the tri-state area (the others were Yale and Princeton).

The college also made an appearance for the fourth consecutive year on the U.S. News regional universities list of "Up-and-Comers," and ranked 26th in the overall northern regional universities' rankings.