This past summer, thirteen undergraduate students delved deep into the archives at Brooklyn Historical Society as our inaugural class of summer fellows. During a month in residence at the Othmer Library, they conducted research in the journals of Gabriel Furman and contributed to a new exhibition, *Exploring the Journals of Gabriel Furman*. An avid scholar—the summer fellows described Furman as “quirky,” a “genius,” and “tragic”—whose unusual life was cut short by an opium addiction. The exhibit, on the ground and 2nd floors of BHS, shows how Furman documented a rapidly urbanizing Brooklyn in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The fellows’ research efforts also produced individual scholarly or creative projects, based on original work in the Gabriel Furman papers (ARC.190) and related sources in the library and archives. Because Furman observed all aspects of Brooklyn history and culture, fellows were able to concentrate on subjects that align with their personal or professional interests. One student studied the fashion of the time and the physiology of addiction to create a charcoal drawing of Furman (no known portrait exists). Another re-created the nineteenth-century remedies transcribed by Furman and judged them by modern scientific standards. Yet another produced a video arguing that Furman changed his pro-slavery views at the end of his life. To view all of the fellows’ projects, please see [safa.brooklynhistory.org/fellowship2012](http://safa.brooklynhistory.org/fellowship2012).

The fellowship program is a component of Students and Faculty in the Archives (SAFA), an innovative postsecondary education program which brings undergraduates into the BHS library and archives. Now in its second year, SAFA has welcomed over 800 students in 38 courses from our partner schools New York City College of Technology (CUNY), Long Island University Brooklyn Campus, and St. Francis College. Independent evaluators have found that students who participate in SAFA are more engaged and perform better than their peers. We look forward to welcoming our next group of fellows in Summer 2013.

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