

President's Report to the Bronx Community College Community

September 30, 2016 [REVISED October 11, 2016]

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After a wonderful summer, there is much exciting news to share. First and foremost, welcome back for the 2016-2017 academic year. It is refreshing to see faculty, staff, and students back and our campus bustling and thriving. We had a great Fall 2016 Convocation. I was happy to meet the newest members of our community and to conduct a year-end review of this past academic year. This year's Freshman Convocation was a good opening to our **Year of the Student**. Our energetic Freshman Convocation speaker, Gian Paul Gonzalez, asked us to be "All In." We need to be "All In" for the success of our students. Thank you to all that made both events a huge success.

Please join me in welcoming the newest members of our BCC family. In the Division of Academic and Student Success, Manny Lopez returns to BCC as the Associate Dean of Student Development. Simone Rodriguez-Dorestant is the new Associate Dean of Success Programs. Rogelio Knights joins us as the new Athletics Director. On Friday, September 23, 2016, the Division of Administration and Finance, through the Department of Human Resources, hosted a New Employee Orientation for all new staff. We were happy to formally welcome all of our newest coworkers and wish them continued professional success.

I am excited to announce the opening of our beautiful quad. Many of you may be wondering about the green fencing. It will remain up until the grass seed has fully taken root. As part of the quad renovation project, we have added two additional flagpoles to the existing pole in front of Language Hall. They display the flags of the State of New York and the City of New York. Phase Four of the facilities upgrade project is underway near the University Avenue entrance. We are looking forward to the continued beautification of our historic campus.

In my Summer President's Report, I announced the passing of BCC President Emeritus Roscoe C. Brown, Jr. In lieu of a large public memorial service, Dr. Brown's family held a Jazz Tribute and gathering of Roscoe's Red Tails at the Intrepid Sea, Air and Space Museum. I was fortunate to attend on behalf of Bronx Community College and convey our communal sense of loss and condolence to Dr. Brown's family.

ASAP & FALL ENROLLMENT: BCC proudly exceeded our ASAP enrollment targets for the Fall 2016 semester. To support these students, new ASAP offices have opened on the first floor of Nichols Hall and newly-renovated classrooms are now in use on the first floor of Bliss Hall. While enrollment is down across the University system, we are hopeful that we can remain leaders in the enrollment of ASAP students. The Division of Academic and Student Success is working to develop a partnership with the Community College Research Center (CCRC) to study our ASAP expansion and college re-design efforts. Our work has generated great interest in the field of pedagogy and student support.

While our ASAP enrollment numbers exceeded targets, we still have work to do with transfer students and returning students. We continue to lose nearly 40% of our returning students from Fall semester to Fall semester. This is not sustainable over time. As this is the **Year of the Student**, I challenge each and every one of us to come up with ideas and ways to improve retention and increase graduation rates.

BUDGET & CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION: BCC is awaiting the finalization of the budget and Financial Plan for Fiscal Year 2017. Our preliminary allocation is \$74.6M, but we expect some adjustments during the finalization process. Department are asked to spend at the same level as Fiscal Year 2016. Once a final budget has been provided by CUNY Central, it will be shared with the campus community. Additionally, the new PSC/CUNY Collective Bargaining Agreement is being implemented. Initial bonus checks are scheduled for disbursement on Friday, October 21, 2016. **We are hopeful that retroactive payments may be available as early as January 2017; however, no exact date for disbursement has been set at this time.**

NEW PROGRAMS: Both the AA in English and AS in Exercise Science and Kinesiology are now being offered at BCC. The prior AS in Community/School Health Education was revised and is now offered as an AS in Public Health. Congratulations again to the Chairpersons and Faculty of the Departments of English and Health, Physical Education, and Recreation for their work in bringing these new programs to fruition. I look forward to sharing success stories from these programs in the future.

WEBSITE REDESIGN: We are pleased to inform the campus that BCC has finalized the contractual arrangements with the vendor selected to oversee the College's website redesign and the rebranding initiative that will help us better articulate our core strengths, mission, and values. This is an ambitious project that will involve all departments and units. We are looking forward to work commencing in the upcoming weeks.

BCC FOUNDATION & CUNY CAMPAIGN: It is with great pride and humility that I thank all members of the Bronx Community College community for your contributions during the last CUNY Campaign. Only three (3) Community Colleges reached their goals (BCC, Hostos, and Guttman). BCC won the most of all Community Colleges and won the Highest Achiever Award. Our goal was \$32,000 and we raised \$35,418 with a participation rate of 47.1%. Thank you for your contributions. They have an immense impact on the lives of our students.

Additionally, in Fiscal Year 2015-2016, the BCC Foundation Board:

- Raised over \$1,017,000 in private support;
- Awarded scholarships totaling \$168,747 to 152 students in need of financial assistance;
- Provided additional \$100,000 in emergency assistance to students for housing, transportation, food, and childcare;
- Raised \$200,000 for students at the *Building the Dream, One Student at a Time* Gala;
- Provided \$10,000 to establish BCC's first food pantry; and
- Established the Kalief Browder Memorial Scholarship.

EFFORTS TOWARDS IMPROVING YOUR CAMPUS EXPERIENCE: I am planning to meet with members of our Adjunct community this semester to hear more about both successes and challenges at BCC. Two immediate critical issues are being addressed prior to that meeting – timely Adjunct payment and identification of additional working space on campus for Adjunct usage. I look forward to hearing more ways in which we can improve the Adjunct experience and demonstrate the importance of Adjunct contributions to our campus and students. Once a date has been identified for this Town Hall, it will be disseminated via BCC Broadcast.

On Thursday, October 27, 2016, IT will roll out a single sign-on solution to the entire campus community, allowing everyone to access their BCC and CUNY accounts from one page and using a single username and password. We are hopeful that this will reduce confusion and improve the efficiency of your online experience.

In an effort to continue highlighting the accomplishments of our community, I am happy to announce that display cases are being installed in the lobby of Meister Hall. This will provide space to display the scholarly publications and works of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni. More details are forthcoming about how to have your items displayed.

GRANTS & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: Join me in congratulating Neal Phillip, Chairperson of the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Technology, on being the keynote speaker at the Growing Sustainable Communities Conference in Dubuque, Iowa, on October 5, 2016. Dubuque has partnered with IBM in the IBM Smarter Cities program, which awards grants annually to cities around the world to support innovative initiatives that optimize processes towards environmental sustainability.

In noteworthy faculty accomplishments from the Department of Social Sciences, Emalinda McSpadden, Assistant Professor of Psychology, along with Esther Levy of BCC Personal Counseling, has implemented PSyCh'D (Peer Support and Career Development Program). PSyCh'D trains students on mental health issues and provides outreach to students in need. Gregory Cobb, Assistant Professor of Human Services, was awarded a CUNY grant to develop a Job Linkages Program. Monique Guishard, Assistant Professor of Psychology, was awarded the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Democratizing Knowledge Summer Institute Fellowship. Gloria Rodriguez, Lecturer of Psychology, received the 2016 National Positive Impact Award from Hispanicize and the 2016 Women's Empowerment Award from Bronx organization F.I.E.R.C.E.

From the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences, Professor Sara Brady presented on the Politics of Media Coverage at the FLOW conference on Friday, September 16, 2016. This is a critical forum on television and media. On Saturday, September 24, 2016, Department Chairperson, Debra Gonsler, will be speaking and receiving first place honors in the category of Broadcast Documentary for her film *Every Word Has Power: The Poetry of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel* at the Religion Newswriters Association Annual Conference.

From the Department of History, William deJong-Lambert has been awarded a Mid-Career Fellowship with the Committee for Interdisciplinary Science Studies at the CUNY Graduate Center for 2016-2017. Kate Culkin has received a Chancellor's Research Fellowship for the 2016-2017 academic year. The History Department also welcomes you to participate in the new History Club. Additional details on the club will be available within the department.

Please join me in congratulating our spectacular faculty on their outstanding achievements.

UPCOMING EVENTS: The CUNY Black Male Initiative (BMI) Annual Conference will be held at BCC on October 7, 2016. This year's theme is "The Power of Words." Please encourage your students to participate. Resolution has partnered with the CUNY BMI to bring a Resolution Social Venture Challenge to this 2016 Conference and we would love for our students to participate.

BCC is excited to be an *Open House New York* location, as part of the City's five-borough celebration of architecture and design. On Sunday, October 16, 2016, from noon-4:00pm, BCC will host an Architecture

& Arts Festival to introduce the public to the beauty and history of its campus and to showcase local artists from across New York City. We are the only community college in the United States with buildings that earned a National Historic Landmark designation. This event will feature tours of the campus; performances by local arts organizations of dance, music, and performance art; exhibition of paintings by renowned Bronx artist Daniel Hauben; visual art from a variety of artists; exhibition of the student-built car from our Automotive Technology Program; screenings of student films from the BCC Film Festival; displays from the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, the Historic Districts' Council, and the Bronx County Historical Society; and a "Taste of the Bronx" sampling of the food and drink from around the borough. The event is free and open to the public, but guests will need to register at www.bcc.cuny.edu/ArchFest.

The Office of the President, in conjunction with Professor Jordi Getman-Erazo of the History Department, will be hosting the second event in the 2016-2017 President's Conversation Series on Democracy and Freedom. This event, scheduled for Thursday, October 20, 2016, from 10:00am-12:00pm will be on the topic of *Democracy, Freedom, and Social Justice: Policing and Profiling* and the speaker will be Dolores Jones-Brown. More details are forthcoming via BCC Broadcast.

The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science began its Fall 2016 Seminar Series on Tuesday, September 20, 2016. Talks are approximately one hour and are presented by BCC faculty and guest speakers from other institutions. The Seminar, which takes place on Tuesdays at noon, has become well known around CUNY and beyond. You can access the schedule of talks at <http://fsw01.bcc.cuny.edu/mathdepartment/Seminar/Seminar.htm>. Additional informal discussions on advanced mathematics topics for interested faculty take place at the bi-weekly math meetings on Mondays and Thursdays from 12:15pm-1:15pm and Thursdays in CPH, room 123.

The Hall of Fame Art Gallery, located in Bliss Hall, will host three exhibitions in Fall 2016. In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, the Gallery will feature works by artist Norma Marquez Orozco, who has exhibited in Mexico, Italy, Spain, and the United States. In 2001, she founded Floor4Art, an alternative space in West Harlem housing artists' studios and an exhibition space aimed at producing, promoting, and connecting artists. Her work is on display from Wednesday, September 28, 2016, through Friday, October 28, 2016, with a reception and artist's talk on Thursday, October 13, 2016, from 2:00pm-4:00pm.

September is Preparedness Month. This is an excellent time for members of the BCC community to ensure that you have plans for your families to follow in the event of an emergency. This is also a good time for each of us to take a moment to review and ensure that your emergency contact information is current in CUNYfirst. As an organization, we take preparedness seriously. This month, our campus Bursar, Admissions, Registrar and Financial Aid staff participated in a CUNY-wide emergency trainings. I would like to thank our staff for their participation.

We want to hear about your good work and exciting projects! If you are involved in any BCC projects or activities that you would like shared with the campus community in upcoming President's Reports, please email Deputy to the President, Karla Renee Williams, at karla.williams@bcc.cuny.edu. I look forward to working with each of you in the **Year of the Student** throughout the 2016-2017 academic year.

Best wishes,
Thomas A. Isekenegbe, Ph.D.