

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PRESIDENT’S COMMUNITY REPORT – MARCH 2021

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The one-year mark of our move to a mostly online modality has come and gone. It has been difficult, not only for our students who bear the brunt of these challenges, but for our entire campus community. Despite these many obstacles, I remain hopeful and optimistic about the future, as we prepare for more in-person classes for the fall 2021 semester. A reminder that student registration for summer and fall 2021 registration begins March 29th. Please encourage all of your students to register for summer and fall 2021 classes.

We are all aware of the recent acts of violence toward members of the Asian community. These assaults reached a horrific peak this week in Georgia, where six of the eight victims of a mass shooting were Asian women. This appalling act of hate, violence and misogyny is particularly troubling to the BCC community, where students, faculty and staff of Asian heritage are an essential element of campus life, and to New York City as a whole, which is home to a vibrant Asian community. Our college celebrates and promotes inclusion and diversity. In that spirit, we join our Asian brothers and sisters in grief and mourning. As CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez said in response to this tragedy, “We must reaffirm our commitment to building a society that fully champions diversity and equality, tolerance and inclusion.” Our collective thoughts are with the victims of this monstrous crime, their families and all who are touched by it. I am asking the entire College Community to join me in condemning the recent attacks against the Asian community across our country.

BUDGET: To date, the college has been allocated \$5.419,548 in federal stimulus –\$4.829,313 from CARES Funding and \$590,235 in MSI Funding (Minority Serving Institution). These funds will help to offset the expected \$3.9 million in revenue shortfall in Fiscal Year 2021, due to declining enrollment. The College has expended over \$1.3 million in COVID-19 related expenses, leaving approximately \$96K in institutional aid remaining. The College is compiling the next round of expenditures for the third quarter (January to March 31st) and a spending plan for the final quarter of this fiscal year. Reports of additional funding from the new round of stimulus funds will hopefully support our efforts into Fiscal Year 2022 as we continue to respond to new challenges from the virus and declining enrollment.

FALL ’21 PLANNING: The College is striving to provide a course schedule that is responsive to the stated preferences for students based on CUNY and BCC surveys while adhering to health and safety guidelines stated by the Center for Disease Control and the NY State Education Department. We will be offering a variety of modalities based on students’ needs including in-person, hybrid and online courses. The preliminary fall course schedule for 1232 sections offered by all academic departments offers 6% of courses in-person, 18% of courses as Hybrid and 76 % of courses fully online. Of the online courses 59% are Synchronous and 17% are Asynchronous.

RE-OCCUPANCY COMMITTEE: The Re-occupancy Committee has been divided into three sub-committees: Chairs of the overall Committee - Irene R. Delgado, Kay Ellis, and Lester Sandres Rapalo; The sub-committee composition is as follows:

- 1) Facilities & Technology – chaired by Kay Ellis and Michael Miller
- 2) Safety; chaired by Saul Fraguada and Diane Price-Banks
- 3) Academic Affairs/Student Support – chaired by Irene R. Delgado and Lester Sandres Rapalo.

Both the Re-occupancy Committee and the sub-committees meet bi-weekly. Committee members are hard at work forming a framework that guides our re-opening plan. Thank you to all the participants for serving in this critical role.

MOVING FORWARD: It gives me great pleasure to report that the New York State Department of Education (NYSED) has approved BCC's distance education application for a fully online AA in Liberal Arts and Sciences—even in non-pandemic conditions. Thank you to all that worked to make this happen.

FACILITIES: I am pleased to report that searches are underway for the Chief Administrative Superintendent and the Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator. The Chief Administrative Superintendent search will be chaired by Dean Luis Montenegro and members of the committee include: Octavio Gomez; Laura Broughton, Melanie Grant and Ali Vedavarz. The Environmental Health and Safety Coordinator search will be chaired by David Taylor and members of the committee include: Angel Irizariz and Diane Price-Banks. Thanks to all those who have agreed to participate in the search process.

The water fountains across campus were removed years ago for safety reasons. The PPS team is hard at work installing new wall mounted, filtered units with contactless bottle fill-stations. Currently, work is taking place in Meister and work on the 3rd and 5th floors is completed. On those floors where classes are being held, the stand-alone units have been reinstalled temporarily until the wall mounted stations can be fully installed. The new fill-station initiative is tied to our contactless services efforts to help reduce covid transmission, but also in support of our health and sustainability initiatives. We know this project is disruptive to those on campus - but having healthy, chilled water available for our campus is an important goal for us all. Thank you to the PPS teams hard at work on this effort. Lighting upgrades have begun across the campus with work currently begun in Meister. Work is also underway to provide a SmartMarket with light refreshments and coffee in the Meister lobby.

To prepare for the fall reopening and anticipating more students on campus, the outdoor tables and chairs are being cleaned and resurfaced and additional seating is being added to facilitate increased outdoor use. As the benches present challenges for social distancing, the carpentry team is working to provide outdoor seating styled after the wave hill chairs.

Lockers for contactless book and laptop pick-up are also being installed in the Campus Service Center and the Meister overhang and the college is working to ensure wireless access is optimal. The consolidation of the Technology Service Center has been instrumental in the mobile device management and supporting the expanded technology needs on the campus. Work is underway on several projects to support online teaching and learning and telework, including a new timekeeping system. The IT team has enhanced the mobile application to include an icon to facilitate connection to mental health services.

For historians- please note that March 30th marks the 120th Anniversary of the Hall of Fame. We are so fortunate to have this historical landmark on our campus.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES: On Monday, April 19th from 5:30-7:00pm, Bronx Community College and our Student Government Association, in partnership with Hostos Community College, Lehman College, CUNY, NYC Votes, The Bronx Chamber of Commerce, NYPIRG, LWVNYC, LCVNYC, Citizens Union, and Dominicanos USA, will be hosting a Bronx Borough President Forum with the candidates for this office. The topics are: Economic Development, Higher Education, Public Health, Public Safety, and Affordable Housing.

SCHOLARSHIP AND GRANTS: BCC I am so pleased to announce recent BCC awards with grants from New York State via the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process:

BCC and the Day Care Council of NY will design and pilot an innovative apprenticeship in the growing field of Educational Services thanks to a \$452,262 over two years for The Early Childhood Associate (CDA) Apprenticeship Program. The project will “reactivate” an apprenticeship program that the NYS Department of Labor currently designates as an “inactive trade,” by training low-income residents to become teacher assistants and placing them in apprenticeships in early childhood settings. The program

will train 50 people over two years. BCC will provide training leading to the Child Development Associate credential and The Day Care Council will act as the employer sponsor. Madelaine Centeno is the PI.

The Job Linkage program - "Connecting Associate Degree Programs and Credit-Bearing Certificate Programs to Employer and Industry Needs" recently received \$435,000 in funding for the proposed project to enhance several of our Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree programs and non-credit workforce programs to better prepare our students for in-demand careers. The programs we will focus on will include Business & Information Systems (specifically Business Administration and Accounting); Digital Arts; Nursing; Medical Lab Technician (MLT); Nuclear Medicine Technology (NMT), Radiologic Technology (Rad Tech); Automotive Technology and Cybersecurity and Networking and the following non-credit programs: building trades (i.e., carpentry, plumbing and electrical) and allied health (i.e., phlebotomy and pharmacy tech). The funds requested will allow us to incorporate new, up-to-date equipment; industry-recognized certifications; improved curriculum and critical support services, including targeted tutoring, industry accreditation fees, marketing and support for our industry advisory boards. The programs we are seeking to improve through this effort are all within high-growth sectors that will position our graduates for well-paying, in-demand jobs. Dr. Luis Montenegro is the PI.

BCC IN THE NEWS: BCC's partnership with Sarah Lawrence College (SLC) is official, launching a pilot initiative that will provide exceptional opportunities for our highest performing graduates interested in completing a liberal arts bachelor's degree. This pilot will apply to four BCC graduates who will be able to pursue their bachelor's degree at SLC with exceptional support. Our students will be fully covered for tuition and fees at SLC by financial aid grants—including extensive institutional aid from SLC. Just as importantly, we are working closely with SLC to ensure our graduates succeed when they transfer. This includes SLC events this spring and summer and early advisement and mentoring from Sarah Lawrence faculty. We are now in the process of implementing this pilot initiative.

Please be sure to check out BCC's new electronic Recruitment Brochure. The vibrant pictures feature our wonderful students and help capture the spirit and diversity of our College. Thanks to the entire team for working on this important recruitment tool.

Good Day New York featured coverage of our critical Food Pantry; and BronxNet continues with its weekly BCC coverage recently highlighting our Veterans Affairs and Disability Services staff with interviews of BCC's John Rosa, Preston Burger and alums Nick Gradowski and Ash Tobar. Our own Jordi Getman was featured, who spoke about online learning, along with Early Childhood Center Director Jitinder Walia who chatted with a mother whose child attends the program.

I would like to wish everyone a very happy and restful spring break. I hope you will use the time to recharge. When we return, we will continue our important work during this semester, and look ahead toward graduation. We must encourage our students to get them over that last academic hurdle and across the finish line. Thank you for the continued support and collaboration as BCC looks to the future.