

Bronx Community College
PRESIDENT’S COMMUNITY REPORT – February 2021

Thomas A. Isekenegebe, Ph.D.

Spring classes are well underway. It is hard to believe that we are approaching the one-year mark of transitioning almost fully to the online modality for classroom instruction. The Pandemic has ravaged us: our campus, our city, our state, our country. We have suffered unspeakable losses and even here on campus we mourn our friends and colleagues. There is no question, we have been tested; yet there is no doubt we will prevail. In true Bronx style, we forge ahead. In looking toward the future, my hope is that we work collaboratively toward assisting our students and each other as faculty and staff in safely getting back to in-person learning.

We will meet virtually on Friday, February 26th 10:00 am - 11:30 am for our first Town Hall this semester. If you have not already done so, please register [here](#) to participate. I am so looking forward to seeing all of you – even if it is still via a screen. During the Town Hall we will discuss current budget and enrollment challenges along with our preparation and plans to implement the Chancellor’s directive for our gradual return to in-person instruction for the fall ’21 semester. The Provost will present the modalities in discussion for scheduling classes and identifying the best locations for safe classroom instruction. Time will be provided for questions and answers.

ENROLLMENT/BUDGETARY CHALLENGES: Enrollment continues to decrease at the Community Colleges University-wide with corresponding steep revenue declines. To date, for spring ’21 BCC shows slightly more than a two-thousand decrease from spring 2020 in student enrollment representing a 2.6 million dollar decline in revenue. Please see the CUNY Spring 2021 Enrollment and Revenue Dashboard [here](#).

ZOOM BOMBING: As I reported to the campus community earlier this week, during one of BCC’s Black History programming events, an individual usurped the screen and “zoom bombed” with hate postings and speech. Similar attacks happened across other CUNY campuses. The type of attack witnessed during the *Pronouns Matter* event is abhorrent. It is antithetical to the mission and ideals of Bronx Community College. I know you will join me in emphatically denouncing this type of hate speech and activity. Zoom security protocols have been recirculated and I remind you all again to be vigilant in monitoring your use of the Zoom platform. Additional steps are being taken University wide to further secure our virtual meetings. Please do not hesitate to contact the Interim Chief Information Officer, Luisa Martich for any further guidance luisa.martich@bcc.cuny.edu.

STUDENT UPDATES: Congratulations to our new Student Government President, Gabriel Morillo, newly elected to serve for the spring semester. Many thanks to Priscilla Tokor, now a BCC alum, for her service as president during the fall 2020 term.

Bronx Community College is proud to have four of our students as semi-finalists in the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Transfer Scholarship. Congratulations to students Suleidy De La Cruz, Zouberou Sayibou, Ama Afful, and Ana Abreu. The Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship is a highly selective scholarship for the nation’s top community college students seeking to complete their bachelor’s degrees at four-year colleges or universities.

The Office of Personal Counseling is pleased to announce the addition of three new part-time student mental health clinicians. They will join the OPC staff in offering Anxiety Support groups for students - small group sessions are held every Monday on Zoom from 12:00 to 1:00pm, starting Monday 2/22 and ending Monday 5/24.

Unfortunately, CUNY has announced the cancellation of the spring 2021 sport season. In spite of this tough news, BCC Athletics is proud to announce nineteen (19) Green & Gold Club honorees who have all managed a 3.25+ GPA for Fall 2020. The Broncos will be ready to go with the replacement of the Ohio Field infield thanks to CUNY reserve funding- [YouTube link](#).

BCC IN THE NEWS: The 2020 Annual Report of Bronx Community College is now online:

Entitled The Power of Perseverance, this 90-page collection of articles, images and videos is both a look back at last year and a tribute to the remarkable endurance of the BCC community that saw us through the most difficult months in the College's 63-year history. Click [here](#) to view this report.

Three (3) TV spots in both English and Spanish featured Students, Faculty and Staff and Alumni appeared throughout the Altice Cable Network in the Bronx in support of Spring Enrollment Efforts. The combination of the mixed media in support of Spring and Spring 2 helped boost enrollment and provide analytics for future efforts. The advertisements can be viewed on BCC's Communications and Marketing page [here](#).

Weekly coverage on BronxNet's show: *Open with Darren Jamie*, continues to highlight BCC's programs, services and offerings while featuring the program leaders and Alumni who have benefited from these programs. The latest coverage includes: Med Tech, Rad Tech, Veterans Affairs, Disability Services and the ECL to name a few.

BCC is requesting \$575K in Capital funding for FY 22 along with \$50K in Expense Funding from the Bronx City Council Delegation and Speaker Corey Johnson for the food pantry and its relocation to Community Hall.

GRANTS UPDATES: As part of a CUNY community college consortium, BCC was awarded a \$700,000 U.S. Department of Labor Strengthening Community Colleges grant. For our part, BCC will use the funds to provide the Child Development Associate (CDA) and the Family Development Credential (FDC) trainings for 120 students over four years, preparing students for work in early childhood settings. BCC will serve students who are referred to us from our CUNY community college partners.

BCC's Workforce and Economic Development Department was also awarded a \$300,000 grant (over three years) from the Blackstone Charitable Foundation. As a grantee, BCC will become a designated Launchpad campus. In this capacity, BCC will allocate the resources received to develop and/or enhance entrepreneurship-related programming. Further, as a Launchpad campus, BCC will receive technical assistance from Blackstone. The PI is Karla Renee Williams.

Building Skills is the lead for this Department of Labor grant and are finalizing the contract with DOL. Once approved a subcontract will be issued to the Research Foundation for programming to start in May. Workforce will be offering NCCER training in electricity, plumbing and carpentry. All courses will be offered online with the hands-on component scheduled for the Fall semester once we are allowed to be onsite.

BCC was awarded a \$144,760 (over three years) National Science Foundation (NSF) research grant to implement the use of a model theory, a branch of mathematical logic, to tackle several important problems in functional transcendence theory. The main objective is to prove far-reaching conjectures that predict the algebraic nature of a wide class of special functions. The PI is Dr. Joel Nagloo BCC was awarded a \$14,995 grant from the Metro New York Library Council (METRO) in support of a collaborative project with Mutual Aid NYC (MANYC). Together, BCC and MANYC will develop an Organizing Resource Library (ORL) to document the mutual aid work in marginalized communities across NYC that were devastated during the COVID-19 crisis, and whose stories are at significant risk of being lost. The PI is Cynthia Tobar.

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY: As we conclude the celebration of Black history month, I want to express my thanks and appreciation to all of our students, faculty and staff that have participated in the month-long programs. I also want to acknowledge all those of African-American and Black ancestry who have contributed to the history and growth of our city, state and country. One of the best things about BCC is the diversity of our campus population; we strive to celebrate our rich diversity year-round with various, thought-provoking events and programs that engage our students, faculty and staff.

In closing, I remind you all to exercise caution and to continue practicing social distancing and wearing a mask as we confront new variants of the virus. The vaccine is on the horizon and beginning to be available for those who are directly offering in-person instruction. I am encouraged and believe things will look brighter in time for our fall semester. I look forward to our Town Hall and discussing our future.