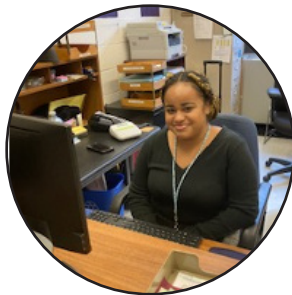


BOLETÍN

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION OF LATINO FACULTY AND STAFF

SPRING 2022 | VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2

CELEBRATING BCC FACULTY, STAFF, & STUDENTS



BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE ASSOCIATION OF LATINO FACULTY & STAFF



CELEBRATING BCC FACULTY, STAFF, & STUDENTS

Letter from the Editor: Professor Nelson Santana

The Bronx Community College Association of Latino Faculty and Staff (BCC ALFS) thanks you for taking a moment to read our official newsletter: Boletín. Spring is a time for new beginnings. As the winter's coldness subsides, the warmth of spring gives life to leaves, flowers, and vegetation, nourishing not only our environment, but also our minds and bodies. This spring 2022 issue of the Boletín features interviews with brilliant faculty and staff across the BCC campus, including Dr. **Nelson Reynoso** (Department of Social Sciences), Dr. **Crystal Rodríguez** (Department of Social Sciences), and Ms. **Jeannette Dávila** (College Discovery Program). This issue also includes a special tribute to Dr. **J. Juechter**, director of the Perkins Tutoring Center. **Mrs. Tiffany Dubbon-Yard** (Student Support/Student Life), shares a personal reflection. Dr. **Andrea M. Ortuño** (Department of Art and Music) provides readers with an update pertinent to the Hall of Fame Gallery and art gallery programming during this semester. The Boletín includes an update on the status of the Liberal Arts and Sciences: Black and Latinx Studies Option at BCC, provided by Dr. **Crystal Rodríguez**.

Students are the lifeline of Bronx Community College. Included within this issue of Boletín is an article by Dr. **J.**, highlighting one of CUNY's own students: Ms. **Emily Méndez**. As noted, this issue of Boletín not only highlights the accomplishments of BCC's faculty and staff, but it also provides information that is relevant to our BCC students--the one thread that binds us all. One of the Association's strengths are the basket of awards (also known as scholarships) established by the Association and offered to our community of students. Not only does this issue highlight new awards established within the past few months, but this issue of Boletín also provides readers with direct links to this year's award applications.

Credit must be attributed where credit is due. It was ALFS President Leidy Pichardo who suggested we capture the voices of the Association's members via interviews. I thank President Pichardo and the members of the ALFS for their work in putting together this issue. Thank you to ALFS members for allowing us to share your stories. Since becoming editor-in-chief of the Boletín, this is my first "Letter from the Editor." I want to thank Mr. **Edwin Román** (Office of Academic Affairs), who provided the proper guidance for me to continue his work when he served the ALFS as editor-in-chief

of the Boletín. Lastly, we are grateful to our readers for reading the spring 2022 issue of Boletín.

The Liberal Arts and Sciences: Black and Latinx Studies Option at BCC

The Black and Puerto Rican student activism of the late 1960s and early 1970s pushed BCC to create courses that center Black and Puerto Rican studies and the Black and Puerto Rican Studies Option to the Liberal Arts & Sciences AA. Over the years, the name of this interdisciplinary degree option has changed, as has the student population of BCC. Over the last three decades this degree option has been "on the books" with the exception of the last 10 years.

In fall 2021, BCC Curriculum Committee (CC) passed the Black and Latinx Studies Option and it remains with CUNY for final approval. The paperwork, research, and presentation to CC was prepared by Dr. Tamar Rothenberg (Chair, History), Dr. Kate Culkin (CC History Department Rep, History), and Dr. Raquel Otheguy (History), working in collaboration with a working group consisting of BCC community members from Art & Music, Communication Arts and Sciences, English, History, Social Sciences, Association of Latino Faculty and Staff, and Unity & Strength.

The Liberal Arts and Sciences: Black and Latinx Studies Option arrives at the perfect time at BCC, when Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez has emphasized his commitment to funding and supporting Black, Latinx, and Ethnic Studies at CUNY. The Black, Race and Ethnic Studies Initiative (BRESI) funded by a \$10 million-dollar Mellon grant is just one of many recent initiatives in CUNY's long history, alongside a recently revitalized El Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños under the stewardship of Dr. Yarimar Bonilla.

The Black and Latinx Studies Option passed through our Curriculum Committee and Senate successfully. Since December 2021, CUNY Central is reviewing this option and we are waiting for their approval. The goal is for the degree option to start in fall 2022.

- Dr. Prithi Kanakamedala in collaboration with members of the BCC Black and Latinx Studies Working Group.

Emily Méndez: A Story of Professional Success at Bronx Community College

By Dr. J. Juechter - Director, Perkins Tutoring Center

Last year, Emily Méndez applied for, and was hired at BCC, as an office assistant employed by the Research Foundation of CUNY. This Organization which manages grant programs across the City University of New York (CUNY) is the source of funding for the College's Perkins Tutoring Center that has been a steppingstone for personal, academic, and career development for more than 1,000 tutors in the last 22 years. Ms. Méndez's story became one of several professional success stories.

Ms. Méndez is the daughter of the Latino Association's secretary, Jeannette Dávila. From her perspective as a first-generation Latina graduate, working as the Perkins office assistant alongside Director Dr. Juechter, was an opportunity to work in an academic setting in activities which required high levels of technical, interpersonal and writing skills. She wrote and produced two newsletters per week, observed tutors on a regular basis both virtually and in labs, set up Zoom meetings for the Center, developed Excel reports and maintained the files for more than a dozen staff. As a dedicated employee, Ms. Méndez quickly learned the complex RF CUNY payroll protocols and was well able to train new tutors on the system.



Ms. Emily Méndez

Ms. Méndez was in her last semester at Lehman College when she started her position, maintaining a high GPA when she finished her coursework in December. Despite the significant work and academic load, Ms. Méndez followed her career vision in Speech Pathology. She applied for, and was accepted for her master's degree at New York University's Steinhardt School for Speech Pathology with some scholarship support. Not surprisingly, she was quickly employed in a valuable position in her field with a New York City Department of Education elementary school. Emily Méndez is now transitioning to this new phase in her life where we know she will continue to strive, contribute and build new skills for a successful life. We will miss this ambitious woman who worked very hard for tutors to achieve success stories with the Perkins Department. . . and then achieved her own. Good Luck, Emilly.

A Special Salute: Dr. J. Juechter, Director, Perkins Tutoring Center

**By Leidy Pichardo - Academic Support Coordinator, College Discovery Program
Chairperson of the BCC Association of Latino Faculty and Staff**

In 1997, Dr. J. Juechter received a Presidential Grant to upgrade Bronx Community College tutoring in three departments. The initiative was motivated by the sporadic tutoring services received by her students and, obviously, this a similar incentive in writing the recent Presidential Grant to Enhance BCC Campus Tutoring. As a result of the early grant work, the Perkins Tutoring Center was established and gained national College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) Tutor Training Certification at three Levels with more than 1,200 BCC tutors trained and placed in the last 22 years.

With the recent grant, permanent resources and specialized training have been delivered to multiple departments. As a grant writer, Dr. J. has obtained more than a dozen grants from the Professional Staff Congress of CUNY (PSC-CUNY), New York State Department of Education, HUD COPC, Bronx Council on the Arts, National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the New York State Department of Labor for projects at BCC. On the academic side, she initiated two curricula, Criminal Justice and Warehouse Management, as well as bringing HLT 94 Human Nutrition to the College. Although her most challenging task for 12 years was as BCC student ombudsperson, organizing training and professional development as director of the CUNY Women's Leadership Institute for 15 years was a defining highlight.

The Association of Latino Faculty and Staff salutes Dr. J. Juechter as a leader who has paved the way for outstanding tutor training and development. As a contributing member of the Association, we extend a much-deserved salute to all of her accomplishments and the many student lives she has impacted throughout her career. Congratulations and thank you for your service!



Dr. J. Juechter

Interview with Dr. Nelson Reynoso - Associate Professor, Department of Social Sciences

Founding member of the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff

Can you share information regarding your background? For example, your family heritage, where you studied, any challenges or accomplishments that impacted your life, etc.

I was born in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. I immigrated to the United States at the age of four. After several years in the Bronx, my parents returned to live in the Dominican Republic. I went to school in the Dominican Republic and returned to the United States when I was twelve years old. I graduated from Kingsborough Community College. Then, I obtained my bachelor's and master's degree in psychology at City College. In 2004, I earned my Ph.D. from New York University.



Dr. Nelson Reynoso

Since joining the BCC family in 1996, I have been the recipient many professional and personal accomplishments in teaching effectiveness, scholarly activity, and service. My contributions in these areas have been student-centered. I have served in various capacities at the College. As a former faculty in the department of Student Development, I was part of designing the first-year seminar (FYS 11), which I have taught from its conception. I served as director of counseling for six years and made significant improvements in our advising and registration processes in collaboration with other departments. In 2018, I joined the Department of Social Sciences, where I teach psychology. My most important contribution has been helping marginalized and disenfranchised students of color achieve their career and educational objectives.

How does your unique personal experience contribute to your success as a faculty member at Bronx Community College? Do you believe this experience helps you to better understand our students at BCC?

Having graduated from a community college, and having experienced similar socioeconomic experiences as BCC's students, have allowed me to connect with them at a deeper level both in the classroom and outside the school. I have served as the faculty advisor for the Dominican Cultural Club. I know what it is like not to have money to buy books or register for classes because I went through the same situation. My goal is always to inspire my students; not to give up but to persevere, just as I did.

My teaching philosophy is student-centered, emphasizing culturally relevant material. As educators, we must recognize, affirm, and respond to the differences and associated needs and provide instruction responsive to students' cultural differences. Integrating a culturally responsive teaching philosophy has enabled me to be responsive to student differences and be student-centered. Using this approach, I have been able to help my students eliminate barriers to learning and achievement and open doors to their achievement in order to help them reach their potential. I use a series of culturally relevant teaching methodologies to engage students in the learning process. Being culturally responsive means helping students to feel welcome and understood in the classroom. It also means developing an effective relationship with students and including teaching strategies that are effective and culturally relevant to students' learning styles.

How did you get started working in CUNY?

I started working at the City College of New York as a Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge (SEEK) counseling faculty member in the Special Programs department. I then applied for a counseling faculty position at Bronx Community College and was hired in the spring of 1996.

As an Afro-Latino scholar, I have made several contributions to my field. I co-authored and received a \$30,000 CUNY Collaborative grant in Fall 2006 with Dr. Sharon Utakis from the English department to conduct the Dominican Oral History Research Project. This research study is entitled "Dominican Oral History Project: A Study of Educational and Vocational Experience." I am pleased to share that the Interview data from the oral history project were deposited at the archives of the Dominican Studies Institute at the City College of the City University of New York. More recently, I co-authored various BCC Presidential grants focused on the mission of BCC.

My research agenda has focused on understanding academic resilience and persistence among Dominican college students and students of color. Using a qualitative methodology, I have discovered factors that promote academic performance among Dominican English language learners as well as their challenges. Before I transitioned to the Department of Social Sciences, I published a book chapter entitled "Success Strategies." It provides specific strategies from a psychological perspective for first-generation college students to improve their academic success and achieve their vocational and career goals. The book chapter was published by Kendall/Hunt entitled, "Achieving your Goals."

To continue reading this interview with Dr. Nelson Reynoso, please continue to page 10.

ALFS AWARDS FOR BCC STUDENTS

The Bronx Community College Association of Latino Faculty & Staff have established several awards for Bronx Community College Students. These awards are given to students of Hispanic or Latino/a/x origin who have excelled academically in his/her/their chosen major at BCC, and has made a contribution to the College or the community.

Funds can be used however you choose: to pay for tuition, travel expenses, books, or other expense.

Please feel free to click the following link below to learn more about these opportunities and read the description for each award:

<https://www.bcc.cuny.edu/campus-life/student-life/campus-diversity/association-of-latino-faculty-and-staff/scholarship/#1647456814303-8fcdc457-9e6c>

Awards

ALFS Student of the Year Award

BCC GRIT Award

Dr. Lester Edgardo Sandres Rápalo DACA Student Award

Edelmira Alers Latinas in Nursing Award

Fatima Isekenegbe Service Award

Future Now Award

Leadership & Emotional Intelligence Award

Renacimiento en Fortaleza Award

Rev. Dr. Samuel Acosta Memorial Award

The Surviving Warrior Award

William Coss Award

Name of Award	Link to Award Application
ALFS Student of the Year Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/alfs-student-of-the-year-application-fillable.pdf
BCC GRIT Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/bcc-grit-scholarship-fillable.pdf
Dr. Lester Sandres Rápalo DACA Student Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/bccdr.lestersandres-rapaloawardfordacastudents-fillable.pdf
Edelmira Alers Latinas in Nursing Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/the-edelmira-alers-for-latinas-in-nursing-application-alfs-fillable.pdf
Fatima Isekenegbe Service Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/fatima-isekenegbe-service-award-alfs-fillable.pdf
Future Now Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/future-now-scholarship-application-fillable.pdf
Leadership & Emotional Intelligence Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/leadership-and-emotional-intelligence-award-application-fillable.pdf
Renacimiento en Fortaleza Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/renacimiento-en-fortaleza-application-fillable-1.pdf
Rev. Dr. Samuel Acosta Memorial Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/rev.-samuel-acosta-award-application-fillable.pdf
The Surviving Warrior Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/the-survivng-warrior-award-application-fillable.pdf
William Coss Award	http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/william-coss-memorial-award-application-fillable.pdf

ALFS AWARDS FOR BCC STUDENTS

Recent Awards Established by the BCC Association of Latino Faculty and Staff

The Fatima Isekenegbe Service Award

The Fatima Isekenegbe Service Award annually grants a \$250 award to two students. Each student needs to meet the following criteria:

- Must be enrolled at Bronx Community College (BCC) with a GPA of 2.5 or above.
- Must be involved in volunteer service in the community.
- Must provide a letter of recommendation from a BCC faculty or staff.
- Must write an essay with a minimum of 500 words detailing volunteer services and experiences in their community.

Additional information:

- This award will be given to the student directly as a check.
- The student winners will be selected by an appointed subcommittee member from the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff. Documents will be reviewed by the committee.
- Awards will be given at the annual Award Ceremony at the end of the spring semester. Two student winners will be selected, each receiving a check for \$250.

Sincerely,

Thomas Isekenegbe,

BCC President and Donor



Ms. Fatima Isekenegbe

The Surviving Warrior Award

The Surviving Warrior Award was created after the traumatic brain injury (TBI) that my son Luis A. Méndez experienced in 2016 and his eagerness, effort that he displayed to continue with his life regardless of his present condition. As a mother and a BCC employee, it is a joy to see how students take advantage of a second opportunity in life. This award will be given to a student that sustained a trauma brain injury (TBI) or has been a victim of gun violence and still is pursuing their studies despite any difficulties or impediments the incident may have caused.

The Surviving Warrior Award will grant a \$250 award to a Bronx Community College student who meets the following criteria:

- Must be a student that sustained a TBI injury or a victim of gun violence.
- Must be of Hispanic/Latino/African American descent.
- Must provide one letter of recommendation from a BCC faculty or Staff.
- Must write an essay with a minimum of 350 words about how having this injury didn't stop his/her/their dreams and instead impacted his/her/their decision to continue with their education.
- Must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0 or higher.

This award is sponsored by Ms. Jeannette Dávila, program secretary of the College Discovery Program at BCC and current secretary of the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff.



Mr. Luis A. Méndez, with his mother,
Ms. Jeannette Dávila

Interview with Dr. Crystal Rodríguez - Associate Professor, Department of Social Sciences Chairperson for Faculty and Staff Professional Development of the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff

What led you to join The City University of New York and/or Bronx Community College?

As a graduate student from John Jay College/CUNY Graduate Center my fellowship included teaching and research. I started teaching at John Jay and really enjoyed working with students. A few semesters later, I learned about an opportunity at BCC to help engage criminal justice students as an activity coordinator. In this part-time position, I helped students with career exploration and academic advisement, hosted workshops and field trips. I noticed the programming developed a community between students and faculty within the Criminal Justice Program. The following semester, I started teaching a class and learned that the second largest program at the college (CRJ) didn't have any full-time faculty. When a lecturer line opened up, I applied. I am the first full-time faculty member in the Criminal Justice Program at BCC. From 2012-2014, while finishing up my doctoral program, I was a lecturer. Once earning my degree, I was promoted to assistant professor in 2014.

Can you please share details pertinent to your scholarship and the type of work that you do?

I define scholarship very broadly, including grants, presentations, and publications. Therefore, my scholarship focuses on cross-cultural competency, quantitative literacy, and evidence-based pedagogical practices that enhance student success. My more recent scholarship focuses on supporting justice-impacted students.

How does your unique personal experience contribute to your success as a faculty member at Bronx Community College? Do you believe this experience helps you to better understand our students at BCC?

I was born and raised in the Bronx, New York, not too far from BCC on Sedgwick Avenue. Growing up, many of my neighborhood friends made some mistakes and ended up in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. They were not bad people, they just made decisions based on their limited opportunities. I became interested in studying juvenile and criminal justice to understand the system, but as I continued to learn about all the inequalities, I became an advocate for reform. I teach students through the lens of injustices and help students develop avenues of reform.

I attended public schools in the Bronx and realized when I started college how far behind I was in education. The limited resources and mentorship at my public schools really put me at a disadvantage. As a first-generation college student, I had to put in extra time just to understand and complete assignments because I was not "college-ready." I worked two part-time jobs while in college to support myself and help my mom with bills. I also participated in as many programming opportunities to learn as much as possible. Therefore, when arriving at BCC, I realized many of the students have similar educational experiences. They have the drive and the dedication, but have limited skills, mentorship, and opportunities. So, I try to provide students with assistance in each of these areas: skills, mentorship, and opportunities.

Why did you join the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff? Can you discuss your contributions as a member of the ALFS as well as your leadership roles?

As a faculty member, it is often challenging to meet colleagues outside of your own department. Shortly after becoming a Lecturer, I was invited by a colleague within my department to attend a general board meeting. I attended a meeting and instantly felt so welcomed and comfortable. I was excited to learn that this Association helps so many students, faculty, and staff. The Association is unique as it develops and sustains a community of colleagues across titles/ranks and departments.

I am currently the chairperson for the Faculty and Staff Development Committee. I have created a faculty and staff mentoring program that started in Fall 2020. We have had two cohorts thus far and look forward to having a third cohort. Our mentors and mentees all volunteer and we are so thankful for their commitment to the program and their colleagues. We think it is important to invest in all our faculty and staff.

To continue reading this interview with Dr. Crystal Rodríguez, please continue to page 11.

Interview with Ms. Jeannette Dávila - Program Secretary, College Discovery Program Secretary of the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff

How long have you been working at Bronx Community College?

I started working at BCC in September 1991.

How did you come about joining the Association for Latino Faculty and Staff?

I joined the Association when it was created, alongside Nelson Reynoso and Orlando Lopez.

Why are you a member of the Association?

As a member of the Association it is very important for me to be a voice and an advocate for all of our Latino colleagues and community at BCC. It has also been my pleasure and joy to see how the Association has contributed to the many scholarship opportunities for our students in need.



Ms. Jeannette Dávila

Can you discuss how you contribute to student success at BCC?

As the College Discovery Program secretary I contribute to student success daily by helping our students. I consider myself a bridge to student success, guiding and assisting students to the correct resources. I help students figure out resolutions to their daily obstacles that may arise in their academic career. One of my essential responsibilities is to be the communication bridge between our College Discovery students and their counselor/advisor. I manage all daily communications received from students and parents. I assist with everything from the start of a College Discovery student's recruitment process all the way through their graduating from BCC, along with managing the daily operations of the College Discovery Program.

Why did you establish the "The Surviving Warrior Award?" and how do you envision this award helping BCC students?

I established this award as an inspiration of my son's hard work and dedication to earning his degree despite his physical condition. I hope this award motivates other students to continue to strive for their goals in their education and their personal life. I want BCC students to know that their dreams are achievable no matter the impediments they may come across. I truly believe "what's important in life is not how you start the race, but how you finish!" My son is a living testament that anything is possible when you have the desire in your heart to excel and be better. Even though he had rough bumps along the way, he is now back on track to graduating June of 2022.

Would you mind providing readers with a biographical sketch of yourself?

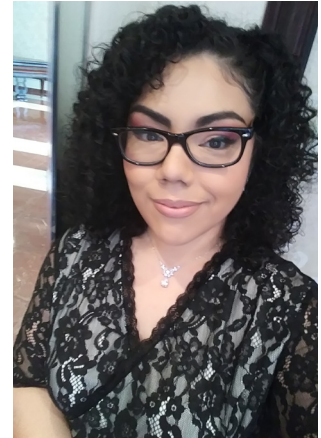
My name is Jeannette Dávila. I have been working at BCC since the early nineties. I have had the wonderful opportunity to work within Student Affairs and the College Discovery Program for over 20 years. I have participated in many committees such as Commencement, the BCC Student Awards Committee, Student Disciplinary Committee, the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff and have chaired and participated in several search committees. Through these committees, I have had the opportunity to service the college, faculty and staff, but most importantly our students. It is my privilege to see our students conquer their dreams and just being a small component of their accomplishment. I am happily married and a proud mother of three wonderful kids, who are all pursuing higher education. Aside from my daily job duties, my husband and I are youth counselors for our church community. Working with youth is an integral part of my life. Not only do I have the privilege of helping youth in my community, but also at the college. Among many things, this is truly one of my greatest passions.

Personal Reflection from Mrs. Tiffany Dubbon-Yard - Student Life Specialist, Student Support / Student Life

Vice-Chair for Student Life and Campus Community Engagement of the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff

I am Tiffany Dubon-Yard, a first-generation Honduran, with a BA in Journalism and Sociology, from SUNY Purchase College and MS in Student Affairs Administration from SUNY Binghamton University. I am currently working as a Student Life specialist in civic engagement for the Office of Student Life at Bronx Community College. During my time at Purchase College I was a resident assistant, worked in EOP, in the parking office, and as a certified Rape, Aggression, Defense (RAD) instructor. In Binghamton University, I worked as a resident coordinator, grad-assistant in the Multi-Cultural Resource Center, coordinator for First Year Programs and the Emerging Leaders Program, coordinator for Late Night Programming for Campus Activities and served as an advisor for the Diverse Cultural Excellence student group.

I started working at Bronx Community College in December 2014 as an Academic Success Coach (academic advisor) for Physics, Engineering Science, Automotive Technology, Electronic Engineering, English and Modern Languages in the Academic Success Center. As an Academic Success coach, I worked in New Student Registration and assisted during academic and financial aid appeal sessions. Seeing so many students coming through the appeals process, I felt that as advisors we should be able to assist these students before they get on probation. I, along with two other success coaches started the Academic Success Center Success Workshops. These workshops were focused on academic success tips and student development training to better prepare our students for completion. We would teach students how their GPA's are weighted, what professors are looking for in their classrooms, important dates to remember for financial aid, time management and organizational skills, networking, and so much more! Since my passion has always been in student activities and programming, I volunteered for New Student Orientation, Commencement, and joined the committee for academic resource fairs. I was also selected to be an advisor for the first Kalief Browder Scholarship recipient, Beverly Emers, by BCC's VP in 2016 and to serve as a co-advisor for Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society Lambda Nu Chapter. In 2017, the opportunity arose to join the Office of Student Life at Bronx Community College. I applied myself and earned the position to work as Student Life specialist in civic engagement.



Mrs. Tiffany Dubbon-Yard

In my role as student life specialist, I served as the advisor for the Student Government Association, continued to serve as the co-advisor for Phi Theta Kappa, focused on voter registration initiatives, assisted with New Student Orientation, coordinated Week of Welcome and joined the committee for Commencement. My joy in my role is that there wasn't a blueprint for Student Life specialist in civic engagement, I was able to make it my own. I wanted civic engagement to become more than just voter registration and election initiatives, I wanted to inspire an urge within our student body to become more involved not only on campus but within their communities. The best way to start this off was through the Student Government Association as they had influence and offered opportunities for students to become more involved. I implemented for SGA to create and work on their own projects to be carried out throughout a semester or entire academic year, ensuring that students understood the importance of being active members of College Senate committees where their voice really counts. This also encouraged other student body members to join committees and serve the student body in those spaces. Through my work with them via committees, I was exposed to faculty members that were doing a lot of civic and activist work, leading to some great collaborative initiatives like Constitution & Citizenship Day, Re-Entry Resource Fair and Art Exhibition, and so much more! This led me to start thinking outside-the-box in terms of civic engagement and how it truly ties to social justice. After a workshop in the 2018 or 2019 Faculty Day, Crystal Rodriguez, Angela Wombugu Cobb, Elizabeth Payamps, others and I started what is now called Justice@BCC, which is a group that advocates for those that were impacted by the legal system. From there, I felt that Civic Engagement at BCC was slowly progressing into something great!

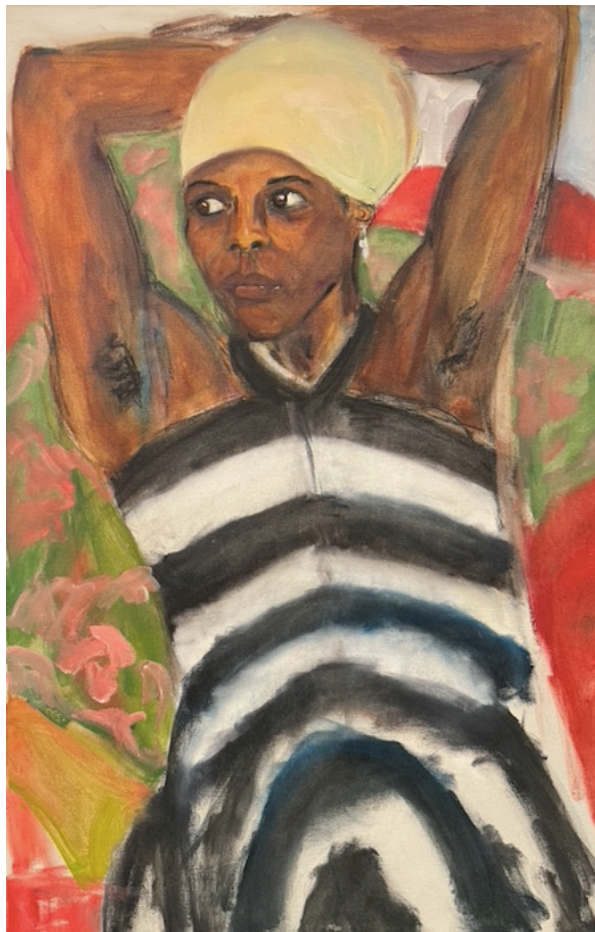
Dr. Andrea M. Ortuño
Director of the Hall of Fame Art Gallery
Spring 2022 Programming

BCC's Hall of Fame Art Gallery has operated on campus for over forty years, much of that time from our space on the first floor of Bliss Hall. In addition to exhibitions of student work at the end of each semester, the gallery features solo shows by artists from outside of the BCC community. Because gallery exhibitions are regularly aligned with monthly celebrations such as Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, and Women's History Month. Showcasing women artists and artists of color is an integral part of our gallery programming.

Even with the Hall of Fame Gallery's Covid-related move to an online platform in March 2020, the gallery has continued to offer BCC students, faculty, and staff quality exhibitions throughout the academic year. In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, the gallery presented the online exhibition *Sin Barreras*, which featured works by glass artist Yvette Ramos-Volz. Currently on display, in honor of Black History Month, is an online exhibition of video and collages titled *Outrospection* by Bronx-based digital artist Michael Paul Britto. <https://www.bcc.cuny.edu/academics/academic-departments/art-and-music-department/the-hall-of-fame-art-gallery/art-show/>

As our entire campus community edges closer to a new normal, the Hall of Fame Gallery is particularly excited to mount its first in-person exhibition since February 2020. In honor of Women's History Month, *Ruth Bass: Portraits of Women, 1974-2001*, will be on display in RBSC 211, running from March 7th through April 28th. A faculty member at BCC from 1965 to 2020, Ruth Gilbert Bass (1938-2021) was not only a valued educator, but also a curator, critic, and artist. The eighteen works on display will span four decades, allowing viewers to appreciate not only the variety of sitters Bass portrayed throughout the years, but also to follow her stylistic development over time.

Art gallery programming is supported in part by the Music and Art Fund, BCC Association Inc., the Art and Music Department, and the Office of Academic and Student Success.



Ruth Bass, Elaine, undated. Oil on canvas, 24 x 36 inches.

Continued: Interview with Dr. Nelson Reynoso

I conducted a research study with Dr. Sharon Utakis entitled “Dominican Oral History Project: A Study of Educational and Vocational Experience.” We have collected the life stories of 25 participants and have presented several papers at various conferences. We have presented papers based on our findings at numerous national and international conferences. In December 2009, our article entitled, “No Tengo Otra Opción- ya me voy”: Stories of Family Separation told by Dominican Immigrants,” was accepted for publication in the Canadian Oral History Association Oral History d’histoire orale Journal. This research has assisted me in better understanding the challenges experienced by immigrant community college students and developing counseling interventions that specifically address their academic, developmental, and cultural needs.

Many of my publications explore how Dominican English language learners attending Bronx Community College tapped into internal and environmental strengths to overcome language, immigration, academic, and personal adversities. Using an oral history methodology, the life stories of two English language learners from the Dominican Republic were recorded and analyzed. The results indicated that the participants experienced the following barriers: separation from family members, difficulties with the English language, and financial difficulties. Despite these overwhelming challenges, these participants overcame obstacles by finding the psychological strength to cope effectively with their challenges, connect with supportive family members, connect with supportive faculty, and develop a bi-cultural ethnic identity. Several other publications and presentations have resulted from the Dominican Oral history project.

I teach an FYS course entitled, “Positive Psychology: Embracing Resiliency and Discovering your Inner Strengths.” In this seminar, students learn noncognitive skills such as grit and resiliency and apply these strategies to overcome adversity and achieve academic success. Specifically, students explore how positive psychology can help them reach their potential. Students use observations and other research methods to critically examine how positive psychology can promote resilience, human growth, and development. Students learn how resilience strategies can assist them in overcoming barriers and how to achieve academic success.

In 2005-2009, I was appointed by the former president of the Dominican Republic, Dr. Leonel Fernandez Reyna, to the Presidential Advisory Council on Higher Education. I provided input into restructuring the higher education system in the Dominican Republic. In 2018, I ran for an elected seat on the New Jersey Board of education and won. As an elected official, I work with the school district, legislatures, and other elected officials to create policies and allocate resources to foster a high-quality education for my community. In this capacity, I have contributed to educational policy development and increasing students’ educational attainment. Lastly, I am writing a book that will provide the readers with an understanding of Dominican immigrants’ experience in the U.S and show how they cope with these adversities. In this book, I provide an autoethnographic account of the immigration experience and resilience from the perspective of Dominican migrants.

In sum, since joining BCC, I have worked diligently in my teaching, research activity, and service to enhance the College’s mission to provide an excellent educational experience to our students.

What led you (and others) to establish the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff?

The birth of the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff emerged to address the multiple injustices and microaggressions experienced by BCC Latino faculty and staff. In 2000, several staff members were told by their supervisor that they could not speak Spanish. As you may expect, as Latinos on campus, we were infuriated by this act of injustice and worked together to establish the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff to serve as a mediator to address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion on campus. In addition, the Association was designed to work with the BCC community to promote diversity and inclusion. As the founding member, I am pleased with the progress that we have made, but there is still much work to be done.

What challenges did you confront at BCC and how did you overcome these barriers?

Faculty of color experience many obstacles at BCC and university-wide. The underrepresentation of faculty of color is a significant challenge at BCC and in CUNY. As a senator at BCC, I have worked with my colleagues to address this issue. I was recently appointed as an alternate member to the Diversity and Equity Committee created by the BCC Senate. This Committee is beginning to address the many problems affecting faculty of color. I embraced this challenge and worked with others to find solutions.

Continued: Interview with Dr. Crystal Rodríguez

What have been your biggest barriers/challenges working at CUNY?

I am thankful for the experiences and opportunities I have had at BCC. With these experiences, there have also been many challenges and barriers for me, to name a few:

- As the only full-time faculty member in the Criminal Justice Program for a few years, I was expected to participate in many committees to build and represent this program. I was encouraged to participate in these service opportunities at BCC, but learned that it put me at a disadvantage for promotion and tenure.
- Limited to no formal mentoring program for junior faculty. I am thankful I had a few colleagues within my department who mentored me informally.
- Limited to no funding for faculty travel to conferences and/or to conduct research. We are expected to produce with little to no support.
- Lack of transparency and consistency in the promotion and tenure process. It is emphasized that faculty focus on excellence in the three pillars: teaching, service, and scholarship, but there has been a major shift to focus mostly on publications for promotion and tenure.

By the same token, what would you say have been some of your top contributions to BCC?

A few of my top contributions to BCC have been to:

- Create a mission statement and program and course objectives for the Criminal Justice Program; also created the CRJ 23 (Introduction to Corrections) course.
- Establish a Criminal Justice Club for students.
- Mentor new criminal justice faculty.
- Develop a strong relationship with John Jay College and CUNY by participating in the CUNY Justice Academy Strategic Planning committee, APPLE Corps program, and more recently on the UFS Committee on Higher Education in Prisons and CUNY Justice Collaborative.
- Co-direct the National Endowment for the Humanities "iPresente! Grant to help colleagues incorporate Latinx history and content across disciplines at BCC.
- Take on a leadership role within the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff to further develop its mission and support colleagues and students.
- Create the Justice@BCC committee to support justice-impacted individuals at BCC and in the Bronx community.

Continued: Interview with Mrs. Tiffany Dubbon-Yard

In the summer of 2020, in the middle of the pandemic, my co-workers and I felt that as the Office of Student Life we needed to be at the forefront of creating responsible spaces and opportunities to properly educate our student body on what was happening within their own surrounding communities. I knew that there were faculty and other staffers that were doing the social justice work in their classrooms and outside of their classrooms. Therefore, rather than recreating work that is already being done, I reached out to my network of 20+ BCC colleagues and asked how can the Office of Student Life assist in amplifying their work. People like Monique Guishard, Gloria Rodriguez, Mara Lazda, Jacqueline Polanco, and so many others were great contributors to our planning meetings, which became the Social Justice Network (SJN). In SJN we collaborated with several departments and areas such as ASAP, College Discovery, Association of Latino Faculty and Staff, MEN, WomXn Up!, Justice@BCC, Unity & Strength, Criminal Justice Department, Social Sciences, History, Research Planning & Assessment, Office of Personal Counseling, Disability Services, Development & Alumni Relations, Research Foundation, the Library, and others. Our work has been presented at the CUNY Diversity Conference, Conference of Community College Excellence and at Faculty Day at BCC. This past Fall 2021, we decided to start a Social Justice Student Leadership Certificate Series to recognize the passionate students that have been attending our workshops and have wanted to get more involved on campus and in their communities. We had a total of eight students complete the certificate series which required participants to attend and engage in a minimum of five workshops in the semester, three core and two elective courses; we provided them with the list of workshops for each area, and they also had to submit a reflective essay of 500 words minimum. We had students surpass the minimum workshop requirements from how interested they were in our workshop topics. From my work in the SJN, I was then invited to join the advisory board of WomXn Up!, and to join the cabinet of the Association of Latino Faculty and Staff.

I truly feel blessed to be working at Bronx Community College, primarily due to the amazing colleagues I have and the students I come across. As a Bronx native, I feel a responsibility to serve our student body to the highest ability that I can. I reflect a sense of genuine success for our student body. I want them to see themselves in me, and by that, I mean just being your authentic self in pursuing your passion in whatever area that may be. I want to be able to continue to lead and guide our students to achieve their dreams, and give them the best experience they deserve because we care about them and their dreams. I hope to continue to do this in a director level position for student success and my end goal is to one day be dean of students. Students are truly my passion and anything higher I feel will lead me farther and farther away from working directly with them. I hope to achieve my dreams at Bronx Community College, but I am not afraid to achieve that dream somewhere else. When will that be? I guess whenever I feel my work is done at BCC. One dream I hope to see come to fruition at BCC would have to be a Social Justice Institute.



Mrs. Tiffany Dubbon-Yard

FACULTY & STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS [LOGROS]

PUBLICATIONS

López, M. (2021). Rationale for Designing a Life Purposes Heuristic Informed by Dignity Therapy for Community College Students. In K. Tobin & K. Alexakos (Eds.), *Transforming Learning and Teaching: Heuristics for Educative and Responsible Practices* (pp. 311-322). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill Publications.

Santana, Nelson. Review of New York and the International Sound of Latin music, 1940-1990. *Choice Reviews*, Vol. 59, Issue 6, February 2022, pp. 59-1616. (Book review).

CONFERENCE ORGANIZED

Santana, Nelson. Conference Organizer. LACUNY Dialogues 2022: "The Interdisciplinary Nature of Librarianship." 25 Feb. 2022.

Professor Nelson Santana Organizes Two Events During Black History Month

Honoring the legacy of the Black diaspora across the world during Black History Month, this past February, the Bronx Community College Library hosted two scholars. Professor Nelson Santana, deputy chief and collection development librarian, organized the events, inviting Dr. Marlene Gaynair (Harvard University) and Professor William Gibbons (City College of New York - CUNY).

Diasporic Caribbean Connections: A Conversation with Dr. Marlene Gaynair

Dr. Marlene Gaynair is a cultural and social historian of the Black Atlantic. She is the William Lyon Mackenzie King Postdoctoral Fellow, Canada Program at Harvard University. During this conversation, Dr. Gaynair and Professor Santana discuss Dr. Gaynair's research, her current summer project, and how this research relates to diasporic community and community building.

To view the conversation, click on the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbg2lpOyZvg>

A Conversation with Professor William Gibbons

Professor William Gibbons is a librarian and archivist curator of Archives and Special Collections at The City College of New York. Earlier this year he was awarded a 2022 "I Love My Librarian Award." During this sit-down, Professor Nelson Santana and Professor Jeffrey Delgado (Kingsborough Community College-CUNY) have a conversation with Professor Gibbons in which he reflects upon his career as an academic librarian, his personal experience, and the contributions he has made.

You can watch the conversation by visiting the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DESTGraxflk>

Professor Nelson Santana & Professor Emma Antobam-Ntekudzi Secure \$10,000 Grant for Dominican Exhibit

Professor Nelson Santana and Professor Emma Antobam-Ntekudzi secured a \$10,000 grant. The BCC Library has been selected as one of 200 libraries nationwide for the American Library Association's American Rescue Plan: Humanities Grants for Libraries opportunity, an emergency relief program. Funding comes by way of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

The BCC faculty librarians teamed up with editors, writers, and photographers from the cultural digital platform ESENDOM to create an exhibit that highlights Dominican activism in New York, Santiago, and Santo Domingo. "Transnational Dominican Activism: Documenting Grassroots Social Movements" aims to address one question: what shape has Dominican activism taken in the twelve-year existence of ESENDOM? Founded in 2009 by Emmanuel Espinal and Nelson Santana, and serving as the starting point for this project, ESENDOM is an online bilingual (English and Spanish) platform that documents people from the Dominican Republic through articles, interviews, oral history, photographs, and video. ESENDOM's team of journalists, writers, artists, photographers, and videographers have documented some of the most important social movements of the past 12 years to impact the transnational Dominican community.

PAST EVENTS



Angie Cruz Presents New Book: Dominicana
Fall 2019



Latinx Heritage Month 2019



"Latina Outsiders: Remaking Latina Identity" Book Launch Event
Fall 2019



DR. THOMAS A. ISEKENEGBE
President

DR. LESTER EDGARDO SANDRES RÁPALO
Vice President and Provost,
Academic Affairs

DR. IRENE R. DELGADO
Vice President of
Student Success

DR. EDDY BAYARDELLE
Vice President for
Advancement, Communications
and External Relations

KAY W. ELLIS
Vice President for
Administration and Finance

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Chairperson of the Cabinet

LUISA (LUCHY) MARTICH
Vice-Chairperson of the Cabinet

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BOLETÍN

NELSON SANTANA
Editor-in-Chief

**LEIDY PICHARDO
JEANNETTE DAVILA**
Editors

EVENTS [EVENTOS]

"What's CRT and Why Does it Make Folx Big Mad?"

Date: 3/29/22 - TUESDAY Time: 12-2 PM

Zoom Meeting ID: 878 0420 6594; Passcode: 697426

BCC COLLABORATORS: WomXn Up!, ALFS, SJN, OSL

"Applying Social Emotional Intelligence in our Professional Practice"
Social Emotional Training with Author, Dr. Barbara Flores-Caballero

Date: 3/30/22 - WEDNESDAY Time: 4-6PM

TO REGISTER:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZMlcuiqqT0tGtR2biMIEc8yMbNPU4tqhyG->

BCC COLLABORATORS: WomXn Up!, ALFS, SJN, OSL

WomXn Up! Resource Center Womxn History Month Closing Celebration

Date: 3/31/22 - THURSDAY Time: 12-2PM

TO REGISTER:

https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZwsc--ppzoiGdD_-cmfxi3u2yDS0ZvPGGk1

BCC COLLABORATORS: WomXn Up!

Healers: Decolonizing Knowledge within Afro/Indigenous Traditions [eventbrite.com]

Date: March 30th, 3:00 - 4:30 PM

Dr. Alaí Reyes-Santos and Dr. Ana-Maurine Lara will share the recently re-named Healers: Decolonizing Knowledge within Afro/Indigenous Traditions [healers.uoregon.edu] website. Through storytelling, they discuss how the website came to exist, how it honors and serves as an education tool about afro/indigenous approaches to health, plants, the body, land, and spirit in the Caribbean and its diasporas. They will be joined in conversation with Las Brujas de Brooklyn [brujasofbrooklyn.com] who will comment and open a conversation about the project and their own connections to these traditions. Organized by the ECHO Project, Center for the Humanities, and The Women's Center.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/healers-decolonizing-knowledge-within-afroindigenous-traditions-tickets-293911656677>

Association for Latino Faculty & Staff Virtual Award Ceremony

Date: Friday, May 13th, 3:00-5:00 PM

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8513710423> ; Meeting ID: 851 371 0423