

**Bronx Community College**  
**PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY REPORT – NOVEMBER 2022**

*Thomas A. Isekenegebe, Ph.D.*

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Fall 2022 has been an eventful semester, with much happening both in and out of the classrooms. As the holiday season approaches, I want to give thanks to all the faculty, staff and students of Bronx Community College. Without your dedication and commitment to learning and service we could not provide our students with the education they need and deserve.

**HEAT ON CAMPUS:** The campus continues to experience intermittent heating issues. After consulting with the academic department chairs and CUNY Central, it was determined to move all classes (except for lab courses in Nursing, MLT, Nuclear Medicine, Rad Tech and Clinicals) to an online format effective Wednesday, November 16, 2022 through Wednesday, November 23, 2022. Our staff in conjunction with external contractors continue to work on the heat issues. We anticipate providing an update on the heating in the coming days.

I am aware of how the heating challenges have impacted and eroded our campus climate. I regret that we failed to deliver heat in a timely fashion. Please know I am aware of the level of dissatisfaction with me and with my Administration. I hear your concerns and I can assure you that I am taking all of them with the utmost level of seriousness and commitment to resolving the problem. I am happy to report that CUNY Central office has sent personnel to assist and to offer help where it is needed. External contractors have also been dispatched to work on control panel and other system problems.

The BCC community has met and conquered challenges before, most recently during the Pandemic and all that it brought upon us and our families. I am moved by how we can rise to the occasion and challenges of work and life, even when we thought we could not face one more thing. You are all known for your perseverance and resilience in dealing with adversity. I am confident those same qualities will now inspire you to continue the great work you do for our college and to redirect our focus on the future and the real challenge of helping our students.

**SPRING 2023 ENROLLMENT:** A reminder that student registration for the Spring 2023 semester is open. Please encourage all your students to register for spring classes. Our Spring semester enrollment headcount target is 6,800 students (excluding CUNYStart and CLIP). This target reflects a 5.5% increase of our *Spring 2022 Form A* enrollment base of 6,444 students. In addition, we will be collaborating with ASAP in order to meet their CUNY approved target of 2,071 students. We will also continue reviewing our advising strategies to enhance our overall effectiveness.

To help with our ongoing recruitment efforts, the Department of Government Relations & External Affairs, has partnered with the Admissions Department, to create a high school recruitment pipeline. To date, BCC's Admission personnel have presented to the Bronx Community Boards, a partnership with the Archdiocese of NYC has been created with the Superintendent of High Schools, targeting the Catholic High Schools in the Bronx, Upper Manhattan, and Parent Associations, with the goal of increasing the catchment areas of these populations.

**STUDENT TOWN HALL:** The Student Town Hall took place on Thursday, 11/10 in the RBSC Playhouse. The President, Provost and VP for Administration and Finance were on stage addressing various inquiries. Students shared their concerns about lighting on campus, heat, faculty engagement with students, transfer of course credits to other colleges, and misgendering of LGBTIQI+ identified students.

**SPARC TRAINING:** SPARC Training is CUNY's mandatory Sexual & Inter-personal Violence Prevention and Response Course for students, faculty and staff. I am encouraging all members of the BCC community to complete these mandatory trainings in a timely manner.

**BLACKSTONE LAUNCHPAD:** On November 17, Blackstone LaunchPad is hosting an event specifically for women at CUNY campuses across the LaunchPad network to learn more about pitching themselves or their companies from executives at Blackstone. BCC's Blackstone LaunchPad Stewardship Council members nominated twelve women to attend this one-of-a-kind event. Professor Paramita Sen, LaunchPad Stewardship Council member, will also participate in the event with the women as a BCC Blackstone LaunchPad representative.

The speakers will discuss how to stand out as a leader, how to market yourself and your ideas most effectively, and how to develop entrepreneurial skills that can be carried over into any career path forward. The event will conclude with a networking reception where participants will have the opportunity to meet with Blackstone employees as well as other women across the CUNY LaunchPad network.

Winners of the Blackstone LaunchPad Ideas Competition: This fall, Bronx Community College ran the Blackstone LaunchPad Ideas Competition powered by StartupTree. This network-wide competition offered students a chance to win \$1,000 to start the next big thing. All current students with an idea, regardless of their major or career plans, were invited to apply.

Judges considered whether each applicant has a unique and compelling product or service, a solid plan of how they will sell, and the overall strength of the application. The judges included Members of BCC's Blackstone LaunchPad Stewardship Council: Ms. Tiffany Dubon-Yard, Dr. Sunej Hans, Dr. Elise Langan, Ms. Luchy Martich, Ms. Katherine Rodriguez from Level Up Ventures, and Professor Paramita Sen. After careful consideration, the BCC LaunchPad selected four finalists to receive \$1,000 each:

**Leilani Agostini** is studying Biology. Leilani submitted "Less Plastic is Fantastic!" under the *Social & Climate Impact* track. Less Plastic is Fantastic! focuses on providing plastic alternatives on campus.

**Lachoy Harris** is studying nursing. Lachoy submitted "Rx Synergy" under the *Health & Life Sciences* track. Rx Synergy is a software application that doctors use to communicate with insurance companies.

**Jaheim Archibald** is studying Computer Science. Jaheim submitted "Acumen Technologies" under the *Consumer Products & Services* track. Acumen Technologies is a time management software.

**Minhazul Islam** is studying Computer Science. Minhazul submitted "LetsLink" under the *General* track. LetsLink is a social platform bringing together key features from platforms we currently use in one place.

Winners from each LaunchPad campus will compete in the national round competition, where Blackstone Charitable Foundation and StartupTree will select and award \$10,000 to the grand prize winner in each track.

**GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS:** You can find a recent list of grants and partnerships [HERE](#).

**GIVING TUESDAY:** BCC's Giving Tuesday Campaign is launched. Giving Tuesday was established in 2012 as a National Day of Giving. The date is consistent as the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. Bronx Community College held its first BCC Giving Tuesday campaign in 2015, while CUNY began the joint effort with all CUNY schools the following year in 2016. We use the term BCC Giving Tuesday to discuss the college's campaign, and CUNY will use CUNYTuesday for all the colleges together. Both are referring to the same day.

All the funds raised go directly back to the students. This can range from scholarships, emergency assistance, transportation needs, and/or textbooks. In fact, one of Giving Tuesday biggest funds in Help a Bronco Graduate, which was created to improve BCC's graduation rate by financially assisting students with 45 credits or more. This scholarship helps so many students earn their degree, and not spend another year or two waiting to graduate.

When we look at the data for all community colleges in CUNY from midnight on Giving Tuesdays in the past four years, BCC was ranked first in amount raised every year, and ranked either 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in the number of donors. In addition, in 2019, BCC ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in all of CUNY in amount raised by midnight on Giving Tuesday.

We ask all our alumni, faculty, staff, and friends to join us again for 2022 BCC Giving Tuesday. You can make your gift online via BCC's website banner or at [CUNYTuesday.org](http://CUNYTuesday.org). If you wish to donate via check, you can send it to the BCC Foundation in Philosophy Hall, Room 26.

**UPCOMING EVENTS - HANDEL'S MESSIAH:** Bronx Community College presents Handel's Messiah in the Hall of Fame Playhouse in the Roscoe Brown Student Center on Sunday, December 11, 2022 at 3:00 pm featuring The Bronx Opera Chorus, The Orchestra of the Bronx, and readings by civic and community leaders from the Bronx including Dr. Ruth Westheimer, Congressman Jose E. Serrano, Ms. Valerie Capers, and more. This performance is open to the general public.

It is my hope that we can move from this place of dissension and shift the discussion to improving our campus climate and direct our focus back to working collaboratively toward engaging and retaining our students.

I want to wish everyone a wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday. I hope that everyone can spend time with loved ones and get time to enjoy all that the upcoming holiday season brings.