

PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY REPORT – OCTOBER, 2023

Interim President Milton Santiago, Ed.D.

It is hard to believe that we are more than halfway through the semester and midterm grades are being submitted. I have received very positive feedback on the “student centered-student focused” theme I have been emphasizing and asking for your participation. I am confident that we will see results in student success from an enhanced customer service approach. I have seen many efforts by our faculty and staff prioritizing students and thereby heightening student engagement. I urge you to continue the effort and to find ways to raise the bar. As Aristotle said, “*We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then, is not an act, but a habit.*” Let’s make it a healthy habit to keep the needs of our students primary.

BCC Unity: On October 18th, the BCC community came together at Roscoe Brown for an event titled, “Compassion at BCC: Conversations & Resources”. The event also was shown virtually for those who were unable to attend in person. A historical context of Israel and Palestine was reviewed along with a discussion on the geographical and cultural crossroads within the region. Emphasis was placed on respectful, civil demeanor when faced with differences and how to discern information/misinformation. A review of the resources available to the campus community was highlighted along with fostering a feeling of safety and tools for processing trauma. My thanks and appreciation to all who organized and participated in this healing event.

Upcoming events include *Antisemitism and Representation, Countering Stereotypes*, with Dr. Miriam Mora, Center for Jewish History, Tuesday, October 24th and on November 1st, *Islamophobia: Countering Stereotypes* with the Muslim Community Network.

2024 Spring Planning: A reminder that student registration for the Spring 2024 semester is underway. Please encourage all your students to register for spring classes. There will be a Bronco Reconnect Mixer on Thursday, October 26th for readmit students. The link to the flyer is [HERE](#). We are working continuously to find ways to enhance communication with students regarding advisement and registration. Academic advisors are focusing on advising and registering as many students as possible before the in-person registration period beginning on November 29th. Please find the schedule for Winter and Spring Advisement [HERE](#).

2023 Budget Updates: I am very happy to announce that CUNY has approved BCC’s spending plan. Approval of the plan means that BCC should receive its full OTPS (Other than payroll services) allocation and purchases may proceed to the approval process. A first quarter report should be received soon.

Cafeteria Challenges: As many of you may know, our cafeteria vendor, A La Carte has left the campus and is no longer providing food services. The college is treating this as a breach of its contract with the Auxiliary Services Corporation and it is being addressed with the appropriate legal recourse. In the meantime, Farmer’s Fridge, part of Canteen, is exploring the option of placing vending machines on campus. We anticipate one to be placed in Meister lobby soon. Given the emergent need and sudden departure of A La Carte, we are also exploring options for short-term contracts to fill the gap while a formal solution is being explored. We will update the campus community as more information is available.

Student Success: National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is recognized every October and includes Disability Mentoring Day (DMD), observed on the third Wednesday in October. NDEAM showcases the contributions of people with disabilities and highlights equitable and inclusive employment practices. NDEAM also provides opportunities to learn more about disability identity, disability experiences in the workplace, and tools and resources for advancing equity and inclusion.

The theme for NDEAM 2023 is “Advancing Access & Equity.” Each year, Empire BlueCross BlueShield celebrates National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) and Disability Mentoring Day

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(DMD). This year, on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, we will have an NDEAM/DMD program that will include resources, information, and practical tips to empower students with disabilities from local colleges. Bronx Community College students can engage in a live Q&A session with the speakers to gain insights and garner career advice and knowledge. This event is designed to encourage learning, foster inclusion, and create spaces for open discussion.

BCC Athletics: I am happy to report that Edwin Martinez, received the Men's Soccer Sportsmanship Award and that Ashraf Abubakar and Mohammed Adbul were named to the Men's Soccer All- Star Team.

Moving Forward: We are facing challenging times. And our student population faces challenges as well. The BCC community has faced challenges in the past and accepted them head-on. I know we can conquer the current challenges, together as one community, now. Our students deserve nothing less.