PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2023
Interim President Milton Santiago, Ed.D.

Welcome back! It was so uplifting to see so many of you at our Fall 2023 Faculty/Staff Convocation. Many of you have shared your sense of positive energy and the celebratory spirit Convocation evoked. Thank you to all who attended for taking the time to share in the kick-off to our academic year. My thanks to Congressman Adriano Espaillat and Dr. Miguel Hernandez for sharing their stories. Their struggles and obstacles along their journeys to success, certainly resonated with the BCC community. As I highlighted during my Convocation remarks, "student centered-student focused" is the theme for this semester and academic year. I have asked you all to participate in a "customer service" approach with our students. Let's strive for ways to keep our students engaged, not only in the classroom but on campus and for events as well. Let's reimagine how we connect and impact those who need it most. Despite our challenges, consistently serving our students should be a top priority and a campus-wide effort.

It will not always be easy, but it is possible. Our challenges, and there are many, do not prevent us from making the effort to prioritize our students. As the US Open concludes in the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, I am reminded of the great Arthur Ashe and his humble advice, *"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."* Let's do what we can to make sure our offices are fully staffed and ready to greet students. We all must work together to strengthen our customer care focus to create a culture of excellence and a student centric environment.

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT: Great strides were made by the Enrollment Management Team. I am happy to report that BCC's Fall 2023 enrollment is stable. We continue to have a great deal of work ahead, but as of Monday, Sept. 18th, BCC enrolled 6,929 students and generated 4,601 FTEs. We have already surpassed our overall enrollment target but fell short of our FTE target (*correlated with our continuing student shortfall*). We will continue to enroll College Now cohorts and generate additional FTEs. This is the last week to enroll the remaining number of College Now students, which is targeted to be an additional 119 students. The High Schools are open, and the College Now team is able to engage counselors and students informing them about taking advantage of the program. My thanks to the entire **TEAM** who worked tirelessly over the summer for our in-person registration events; your work went a considerably long way to this effort. All those involved, Registrar, Financial Aid, Bursar, Admissions, Advisement, Student Affairs, and the Integrated Communications Center (ICC) and Faculty support deserve many thanks for their dedication and commitment to enrollment efforts.

I will continue to advocate for new strategies like the implementation of the Bronco Reconnect Center (BRC) which dedicated two full-time staff members solely focused on the enrollment of readmitted students. We have officially surpassed our transfer and readmit enrollment targets since our 2020 benchmarks and surpassed our freshmen enrollment target since our 2021 benchmark. This was an excellent effort on behalf of everyone involved in the enrollment process. None of this would have been possible without our collective efforts.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: This semester, BCC officially launched fully online degree programs in Cybersecurity and Networking, Education, English, Digital Design, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Public Health. Student interest was significant, with 46 new students ultimately enrolling. I thank Dr. Jordi Getman-Eraso, Director of Online Learning and Professor of History, and the full Online Programs Working Group for all their efforts in this regard. For additional details, please see the new online programs [webpage](#) and a recent [presentation](#) given to the Vice Presidents, Deans, and Chairs meeting.

BCC recently signed an agreement with the Fonseca Group, a major franchisee of McDonald's restaurants in the metropolitan area, that will grant credit for prior learning (CPL) to students on the basis of completion of McDonald's corporate management training programs. This new CPL agreement adds to our growing list of [initiatives](#) intended to recognize college-level learning outside the classroom. Many thanks to Prof. Howard Clampman, Chairperson, Business and Information Systems Department, and Mr.

Alán Fuentes, Director, Office of Career Development, for their key roles in developing this new agreement.

The University conducted a needs assessment over a period of several months with input from faculty, students and staff across CUNY to select the next systemwide Learning Management System (LMS). The University has selected and purchased the Brightspace LMS to replace Blackboard. The CUNY-wide transition to Brightspace will begin in Fall 2023 and end Fall 2025. In Fall 2025 Blackboard will no longer be available. The campuses are divided into four cohorts for the transition. Colleges in each cohort will adopt Brightspace in the same schedule. Our college is in cohort two and is scheduled to use Brightspace for all courses offered in Summer 2024 and thereafter. The Provost has convened a Brightspace LMS Committee that is developing a transition plan for the college. The college will have its Brightspace LMS transition webpage up shortly, and it will include answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), a detailed timeline for the transition and Brightspace resources for faculty and students. For more information about the CUNY-wide transition to Brightspace visit the transition site (https://www.cuny.edu/academics/brightspace-transition/). We thank the members of the committee for this important work.

CUNY INITIATIVES: CUNY is reinstituting the Performance Management Process (PMP) this year. I have appointed a five-person committee to serve on the College's PMP team. The committee will be responsible for gathering relevant information and drafting the College's responses for the required submissions. The first milestone due October 6th is a letter to the Chancellor describing how BCC's local goals align with CUNY's Strategic Roadmap, *CUNY, Lifting New York,* with specific 1-year targets for the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and an explanation of high-level strategy to achieve these targets. I will be providing regular updates on the committee's progress.

Student Success: Over 56 volunteers participated in the Week of Welcome consisting of staff, faculty, students and administrators. This effort began in August for the start of classes. Over 119 were in attendance for Student Convocation on September 7th, 2023. Student Success distributed ten books featuring the student keynote speaker, Luis Mendez. Students who attended also received notebooks as a raffle prize.

The Student Club Fair will take place on September 28th from 12pm to 2pm in the Quad (rain location is Colston Lower Level).

GRANTS & PARTNERSHIPS: Workforce Development and Continuing Education was awarded $240,139 for the Upskilling initiative. As part of this grant, Workforce will offer a new training in front end Web Development along with the Comptia A+ training in cybersecurity. Maddy Centeno is the PI.

BCC's Industry Solutions was awarded $250,000 by the New York State Department of Labor to offer training in IT Work-Ready and Accelerated IT Credentials. Ruby Chua is the PI.

MOVING FORWARD: Our campus has risen to the challenges and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and then transitioning back to being together on campus. We have learned to do things differently, and we have created new and better ways to serve our students. Learning new ways to teach, new ways to provide services and creating new support systems have been heavy, yet productive tasks for us all. I know we can continue the student-centered, student focused approach and find ways to even better serve our students. This is how we continue to evolve and support our collective missions. This is how we create a culture of excellence. I know we are all up to the challenge.