

PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY REPORT – NOVEMBER 2024

Interim President Milton Santiago, Ed.D.

As the BCC community approaches the season of harvest and Thanksgiving, I think it is an appropriate time to reflect on how fortunate we all are to be a part of this amazing community of Bronx Community College. Harvest season reminds us of a time for hard work. I want to emphasize how grateful I am for the hard work and dedication shown to our students by the entire campus community. We are fortunate to share in the values and commitment defining BCC. I ask that you continue to reinforce our values through the end of the semester as we help navigate our students to their goals.

SPRING 2025 ENROLLMENT: The Advisement & Registration Period for the Spring 2025 semester officially commenced on Monday, October 21st. Please encourage your students to register. As part of ongoing efforts to support student enrollment, a successful Bronco Reconnect event was held on November 14th. Registration activities are currently underway in Nichols Hall, where advisors are meeting with students and additional support services are available in the Nichols Hall lab. The staff of the Admissions Office, Registrar's Office, Financial Aid Office, peer mentors, and other campus resources are on hand to assist students with self-registration and to navigate key enrollment tools, including Degree Works, Navigate, Schedule Builder, and CUNY First. These efforts are designed to empower students to become more self-sufficient in managing their academic schedules.

As of Friday, November 15, 2024, a total of 1,920 students have registered for the Spring 2025 semester. This figure represents an 8.5% decrease compared to the same time last year. We are down by 178 students. While the numbers are currently below last year's registration figures, I remain confident that we will see continued progress as registration activities persist. I will keep the campus updated on enrollment trends as the registration period continues.

2024 YEAR-END FINANCIAL PLAN: I am happy to report that the financial state of the college is sound. CUNY has provided BCC with the final Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 year-end update. The report provides information on the revenue, expenses and overall financial picture for the University and its individual campuses. You can review the year-end report [here](#), I am also including the first quarter update for FY 2025 [here](#).

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS: The college is beginning its re-accreditation process with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). This two-year process, occurring every eight years, will culminate in an on-site peer evaluation visit in spring 2027. To reach this important milestone, the college is engaging in a comprehensive self-study where we will assess our educational quality, evaluate how well we are fulfilling our mission, identify areas for growth, and gather evidence to demonstrate that we are meeting the Commission's standards.

This fall the college took the first step in this process by appointing the Self-study Steering Committee. The Steering Committee, comprised of faculty and professional staff is co-chaired by Prof. Seher Atamturktur, Department of Biological Sciences and Sahidha Odige, Director of Academic Affairs and Strategic Operations. They will be supported in their work by Ray Galinski, Dean for Institutional Effectiveness. The Steering Committee will oversee the work of seven working groups, one for each of MSCHE standards. Each working group will be comprised of 10 people, led by two co-chairs – one from the faculty and one from the staff. Co-chairs of each working group were selected earlier this month. The remaining members of the working groups will be populated in February, following a campus-wide email to the campus community soliciting volunteers.

Also in February, the college will submit a draft of its self-study design to MSCHE, which will serve as the blueprint for our self-study. Submission of the self-study design will be followed by a visit by our MSCHE VP liaison, sometime in March or April of 2025.

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STUDENT AFFAIRS: On October 29, 2024, a cohort of 20 students completed Part I of the three-part "ELEVATE: THE PROFESSIONAL GROWTH SERIES" - this engaging three-part seminar series offers Bronx Community College students a unique opportunity to elevate their professional skills, enhance their social etiquette, and connect with industry professionals. Participants will gain valuable insights into how to navigate formal settings while positioning themselves for career success.

On November 7, 2024, the Departments of History & Social Sciences, the Office of Student Life, NYPIRG, and the Office of Student Diversity Initiatives co-organized *Reflecting on the 2024 Elections*, a post-election discussion led by Prof. Seth Offenbach (History) with Prof. Peter Kolozi (Social Sciences), and Prof. Mara Lazda. The event was standing room only.

On November 12, 2024, The Office of Student Diversity Initiatives, Blackstone Launchpad and the Office of Veteran and Military Services hosted our Veterans' Month Lunch with Leaders featuring guest speaker Matthew Solowsky, an 8-year Navy Veteran and Cancer Researcher at Memorial Sloan Kettering Medical Center. The event was attended by over 55 members of the campus community.

BCC's food pantry will provide nutritious food to 373 students and their families during this week's food pantry on Wednesday, November 20th and Thursday, November 21st.

GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIPS: Bronx Community College Foundation was awarded \$300,000 over three years from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation to provide Emergency Financial Assistance to students in need. Funds secured by the foundation will be administered through CARES. Congratulations to all those who worked on this critical application.

Bronx Community College Foundation was awarded \$25,000 from the Lincoln Fund for 2025 to support nursing scholarships.

GIVING TUESDAY: The Giving Tuesday website is open for "Early Donating" and will continue until Giving Tuesday on December 3rd. Our profile focus is the Help a Bronco Graduate Scholarship, which provides support for students with 45 credits or more. Its goal is for the students to graduate this year and not wait any longer. Other areas of interest include BCC Athletics, the Kalief Browder Memorial Scholarship, and the Amadou Diallo Memorial Scholarship. Remember - no gift is too small. We ask all our alumni, faculty, staff, and friends to join us again for 2023 BCC Giving Tuesday. Let's keep BCC's participation rates as impressive as past years!

To date, The Foundation has awarded \$71,073.88 to 94 BCC students for the fall 2024 semester.

News 12 visited Bronx Community College, to highlight the Hall of Fame for Great Americans. Dan Sarafin covered the story and explained how the Hall of Fame for Great Americans was made to honor the men and women who helped shape America. The BCC community is so proud that its home is right here on our historic campus: you can watch the story [HERE](#).

Finally, I would like to wish everyone who celebrates a wonderful Thanksgiving Holiday. I hope that you can spend time with loved ones and find enjoyment in all that the upcoming holiday season brings. Thanksgiving is a time of gratitude and I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks for each of you. Your dedication to teaching and learning and the collective way we face challenges is what makes Bronx Community College a special place. Whether you are celebrating or simply having a respite, I wish you a joyful holiday.