

PRESIDENT'S COMMUNITY REPORT – MARCH 2025

Interim President Milton Santiago, Ed.D.

Spring is in full bloom, bringing with it a renewed sense of energy and possibility across our campus. As the days grow longer and the campus comes alive with activity, I am reminded of the vibrancy and dedication that define our BCC community. We have so many exciting things happening here at BCC this spring! From academic programming to events on campus, our goal is to engage students in campus life and provide all students with an educational experience that will prepare them for life after BCC. I am perhaps most pleased with the collaboration I am seeing between departments to enhance career-connected learning - **making learning relevant to jobs today and jobs of the future**. You will see this theme become more prevalent across the College.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

EKG/Phlebotomy Credit Policy: We are happy to announce that BCC will now, as a standard written policy, award prior learning credit to students who hold National Healthcareer Association certification in **EKG** and **phlebotomy** either through our Workforce Development and Continuing Education department or from elsewhere. This prior learning credit will encourage students holding these certifications to enroll at BCC, particularly in the AS in Health Sciences and the AAS in Medical Office Assistant programs, where this credit will count directly toward degree requirements.

This CPL policy was developed due to the efforts, expertise, and leadership of an ad hoc BCC EKG/Phlebotomy Working Group, which included both faculty (Grace Tursi-Wenzler, Howie Clampman, and Stacia Reader) and staff and administration (Maddy Centeno, Alex Ott, and Jessica Seliger). We thank each of these individuals for their work.

Winter Conference: Ninety-four faculty, staff, and guests attended BCC's 12th Annual Conference on Community College Excellence (C3E) on March 13 and 14. The conference featured 27 presentations, workshops, and roundtables exploring this year's theme, **"Innovative Curriculum and Industry Partnerships: Bridging Education with the Future Workforce"** with a culminating lively roundtable discussion moderated by Irene Delgado addressing "Balancing Workforce Readiness and Lifelong Learning: A Community College Mission." Thank you to Mark Lennerton, Luis Montenegro, faculty and staff of the Conference Planning Group, Barbara Thomson (our Administrative Events Coordinator) and technical assistants in CTLT and IT for making this event possible.

Slots are still available for the **CUNY Career Success Fellows Workshop on April 10th from 12:00-2:00 pm**. This event, titled **"From Classroom to Workplace: An Interactive Workshop for faculty to foster Career-Connected Learning"** will be led by Mirabel Bell-Gam of Biological Sciences and Mohammad Nizamuddin of Engineering, Physics, and Technology. The workshop will also feature two guest speakers from CUNY's Office of Transformational Career Success Fellows Leaders. Faculty are encouraged to attend. [Registration](#) is open until April 2. More information, including an [event flyer](#), will be sent via a BCC Broadcast.

STUDENT SUCCESS

First, I want to congratulate BCC's newest **Jack Kent Cooke Transfer Scholarship Semifinalists!** Orlenny Alvarez de Leon, Lorena Chiribao, Fatimata Jagana and Luis Perez-Gomez have been named semifinalists for this prestigious award, which provides \$55,000 a year to transfer to a top four-year institution. Please wish them luck in the next stage.

Also - A hearty congratulations to our **Womxn Up! Center**, which celebrated its **7th anniversary** and the kick-off of Women's History Month with a joyous celebration. The theme of the event was: "Global Unity: We Are One Sisterhood!". This special event was a powerful, uplifting, and inspiring gathering designed to foster community care and meaningful connections. Thank you to Professor Gloria Rodriguez, Faculty Coordinator for the Womxn Up! Center, for her dedication over the past seven years as well as to all the members of the Womxn Up! Advisory committee both past and present.

On Thursday, March 6, the Division of Student Success hosted its **first Bronco Appreciation and Resource Day** event, with 180 people in attendance. Our students had the opportunity to connect with representatives from more than 30 different departments and learn about BCC's resources. The event also promoted a sense of connection among faculty and staff and was aligned with our efforts to strengthen and improve student engagement and retention. We had a lot of fun as a BCC family. Thank you to Karen Thomas, Director of the Office of Customer Solutions and Retention Services, for creating and organizing this initiative as well as all of the volunteers.

Upcoming Events: We have two upcoming CUNY-wide events being hosted here at BCC. Tomorrow, March 28, we will hold **"When We Free the World: A One-Day Conversation on Manhood in America"** from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. in Roscoe Brown. This event is open to all CUNY students, faculty, and staff, with breakfast and lunch provided. The event is a

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collaboration between my office, ASAP Men's Roundtable, the Office of Student Diversity Initiatives, Office of Student Life, and the Male Empowerment Network.

Join us as we explore topics of manhood and masculinity with filmmakers Kevin Powell and Evangeline Lawson. Their new documentary film, *WHEN WE FREE THE WORLD* – through the lens of five generations of Black men (teenagers to 90-somethings) – will be screened throughout the day and lead us into impactful conversations in workshops around fatherhood, history, race, gender, mental health, culture, violence, the #MeToo movement, and more.

And secondly, we will host the [4th Annual CUNY LGBTQI+ Student Conference](#), “Queer Care: Unleashing Our Power!”, on Friday, April 4. Established in 2021, the CUNY LGBTQI+ Student Conference is an annual event that brings together LGBTQI+ students from across CUNY who are interested in learning more about leadership and creating change on our campuses and in broader communities. This free conference includes food, workshops, a resource fair, a keynote address, and most importantly, brings together queer and trans students, faculty and staff, and allies. The conference is held at a different CUNY college each year, and we are honored to be this year's host.

Finally, this year's **BCC Commencement** will take place on **Friday, May 30**. The commencement webpage is live, and we ask all faculty to visit the page and order their regalia.

BUSINESS OFFICE

Budget: The final Mid-Year Financial report from CUNY was issued on March 10, 2025. BCC is on target to spend \$101 million for Fiscal Year 2025, representing a 17% increase over Fiscal Year 2024 spending. The increase is due mostly to spending of funds from the one-time reserve account, retroactive payments due to contractual increases and an increase in Temporary Services.

Purchasing: To ensure that all FY 2025 purchase requisitions are analyzed, bid, awarded and that goods, services and commodities are delivered before fiscal year-end on June 30, 2025, requisitions (other than for computers and furniture purchases, which were due 3/14) must be submitted and approved by tomorrow, Friday, March 28. As of March 18, 2025, requisitions totaling 13.3 million have been submitted in CUNYBuy, and purchase orders in the amount of \$9.5 million have been processed. We anticipate an additional \$3 million spend in OTPS for this fiscal year.

Cafeteria Contract: CUNY Legal and the vendor's attorney are working diligently to finalize the agreement.

Property Management: A reminder again that the College needs everyone's cooperation with the re-inventory of college-wide equipment. CUNY's re-inventory threshold is the lesser of 1% or \$200,000; however, currently we have \$1.5 million in non-found equipment. Any equipment (non-found) that cannot be located must be reported as lost to divisional VPs and Public Safety. A copy of the incident report must be provided to BCC Property Management so that we may process the asset disposal. The incident report must include the BCC tag number information.

Accounts Payable: The first of three Travel and Expense Trainings was held yesterday, March 26. In this training, Accounts Payable reviewed *How to Create a Travel Authorization and Expense Report*, CUNY Travel Policy, Directive 6, and Federal Per Diem Rates, and more. The training is available online and with flexible schedules. To register, select the "IT Training" icon on the BCC mobile app or use your BRONCO ID and register on the [website](#).

FACILITIES

Boiler Project: As you are aware, we have been achieving major milestones with our new boiler project on campus. I understand that, as of today in fact, we have completed the final stage of the project, with the delivery of our third and final boiler. Congratulations to everyone on this massive endeavor.

Phase V Electrical Infrastructure: Additionally, we are in Phase V of our Electrical Infrastructure project, and the new schedule of building shutdowns is under review by BCC and CUNY FPCM. The shutdowns are required to remove remaining buildings from old power source to new power source. All shutdowns are targeted for weekend work. Campus Planning will continue to keep the college community posted.

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ENROLLMENT

The Enrollment Management (EM) team has been actively working on several initiatives and events, making significant strides in enhancing student services and streamlining processes. It will continue to monitor processes closely and make any adjustments as needed.

The Summer/Fall 2025 Registration Period has successfully begun and the academic calendar has been finalized and distributed to all relevant departments. Key dates and deadlines for registration, grades, graduation, and other events are now available for students and faculty.

The Form A Certification process is still underway with no significant variation from our final enrollment report showing a 4.4% increase in headcount and a 6.0% increase in FTEs.

CUNYWide's E-Permit system is now fully operational, allowing students to request permission to take courses at other CUNY colleges, and the feature has been well-received.

A comprehensive review of the Readmit Process is underway, focusing on enrollment and retention. During the last BARFITA meeting, recommendations were made to improve communication, reduce processing time for returning students, and foster retention in the following semester.

There have been updates to the TAP and FAFSA processes to align with recent policy changes. The EM team has ensured that students are notified of these updates, and staff members are trained to handle the new requirements. The Financial Aid Office hosted a successful March Madness Financial Event on Thursday, March 20, 2025, which was designed to assist students with filing financial aid applications.

Graduation reviews are underway, with the Registrar's staff in consultation with academic departments reviewing students' eligibility for graduation. Any discrepancies will be addressed, and students have been notified of their status. We have not missed a deadline since the revamping of the unit. While additional staffing changes are needed for a sustainable degree certification model, our current collaboration with staff has been successful.

A team of 15 Enrollment Management leaders attended the NCBA (a subcouncil of AACC) Northeast Regional Conference on Thursday and Friday, March 20-21, 2025, gaining valuable information about federal policy changes, educational opportunities, and leadership.

Upcoming Events: The **Graduation Mixer**, designed to assist graduating students with finalizing their paperwork and preparing for degree certification and commencement will take place on Thursday, April 3 from 12 noon- 6 pm. in Colston Hall, Lower Level.

Two Bronco Reconnect events to engage former students and encourage re-enrollment are scheduled for Thursday, April 24 and Thursday, June 19. These events are designed to promote the benefits of returning to school and assist with enrollment for the Summer/Fall 2025 Semesters.

The TRIO program's certified reports have been completed and submitted. These reports are essential for maintaining compliance with federal guidelines and ensuring continued funding.

The **BCC BMI Conference in collaboration with CUNY BMI** is scheduled for June 10th. This event will focus on offering students tools and resources related to career planning and development.

The **CUNY Explorers program** is being reinstituted at BCC to provide valuable support to middle and high school students considering CUNY schools. The program's outreach efforts have been successful in the past, fostering increased awareness and interest in our institution.

ADVANCEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Run the Bronx: The 47th Annual Run the Bronx is scheduled for Saturday, May 3, 2025. We encourage all our faculty and staff to join us in the 10K, 5K, or 2-mile walk. If you cannot participate as a runner, you can still be involved by volunteering.

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With roughly 2,000 runners, we need all the help possible to make this event succeed. Volunteers distribute water, fruit, and shirts and/or provide information to all our participants.

Until 4/26, the event is free for CUNY students and students in high school or younger. To offset those costs, we established the Healthy Start Initiative, which allows donors to support our younger runners directly. This can be done on the BCC Foundation page by selecting 'Give' under the designation 'Run the Bronx.'

Grants: In FY25, the BCC Grants Office, has 151 current awards with an operating budget of nearly \$29 million; 49 grant proposals for more than \$37 million submitted and pending, and 13 proposals for more than \$5 million in progress.

On March 18th, an application requesting \$2,220,000 was submitted to the Nursing Workforce Diversity grant competition, a program sponsored by the Health Resource and Services Administration. Professor Valencia McPherson-White serves as the Project Director and has contributed significantly to program development, as have the Nursing Director and Academic Advisor/Success Coach.

Blackstone LaunchPad is celebrating Financial Literacy Month this April in collaboration with the First-Year Program (FYP) and College Discovery, offering weekly financial literacy workshops on Zoom that cover essential topics, including life planning, building credit, and investing. On April 10, Blackstone will host the second annual Financial Empowerment Summit, featuring industry professionals sharing insights on navigating uncertainty and planning for financial freedom. Additionally, the Dream Job Campaign encourages students to define their dream job and craft a compelling 2-to 3-minute elevator pitch. With more than 90 internship opportunities available on Handshake, students are encouraged to explore these opportunities and reach out with questions.

Green Action Challenge Grant: Please save the date for our '*How Things Work*' Conference, which BCC will host in celebration of Earth Day on April 22 in collaboration with the Environmental Education Advisory Council of NYC, as well as our Workforce Development and Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and Environmental Sciences Departments. The event will encourage students and educators to explore and learn how essential environmental systems, from rain gardens to batteries, support our day-to-day lives!

OTHER

Middle States: All faculty, staff and students are invited to attend an open forum with Middle States Commission on Higher Education Vice President, Dr. Kristy Bishop on **Thursday, April 3, at 12:00pm in the Roscoe Brown Playhouse**. Dr. Bishop will be on campus to explain the re-accreditation process and answer your questions about what to expect over the next two years as the College prepares for its Spring 2027 evaluation visit.

Our Historic BCC Campus Serves as Host for Historic My Sister's Keeper Launch Event: Just this past Friday, March 21, BCC proudly hosted the New York State Education Department's (NYSED) official launch event for My Sister's Keeper (MSK), a program aimed to empower young women of color in the STEM fields. With approximately 600 students representing 52 school districts from across the State filling Gould Memorial Library, the energy level was electric as NYSED pledged its commitment to build on the foundation established by the My Brother's Keeper program and provide financial resources for local MSK programs. A slate of powerful female leaders in NY education delivered inspirational remarks, including Deputy NYSED Commissioner Angelique Johnson-Dingle; Regent Aramina Vega Ferrer; State Senator and State Senate Education Committee Chair Shelley Mayer; NYSED Commissioner Betty A. Rosa; Chancellor Melissa Aviles-Ramos, and Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson as Keynote Speaker. BCC Vice President for Advancement, Communications and External Relations Dr. Eddy Bayardelle provided welcome greetings on behalf of our college.

CONCLUSION

For those of you who will be off campus during spring break, I want to wish each of you time to rest, recharge and rejuvenate. I look forward to continuing our meaningful work together during this final stretch of supporting our students as they approach the finish line at commencement and get ready to thrive in their chosen field or continued pursuit of higher education. Thank you once again for all that you do every day and for your unwavering commitment and dedication. Wishing you all a **restful and refreshing break!**